NEW STATESMAN
SOCIETY

26 October 1990
UK £1.40
US $3.50
IR £2.05
C $4.95

# Colombian crackdown

In the crossfire between the Medellin drug cartels and Bush's purge of poor cocaine producers, the price of speaking out is death

**Parrot power: R W Johnson interviews Paddy Ashdown**

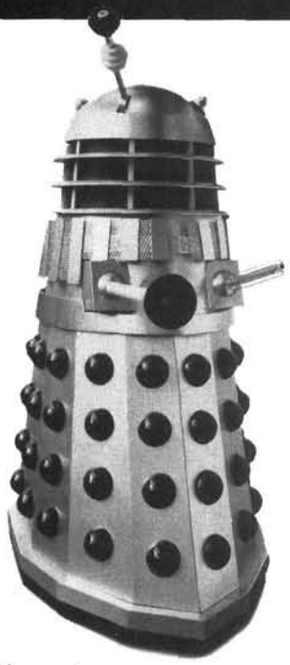
**England unmade me: Howard Brenton on the political imagination**

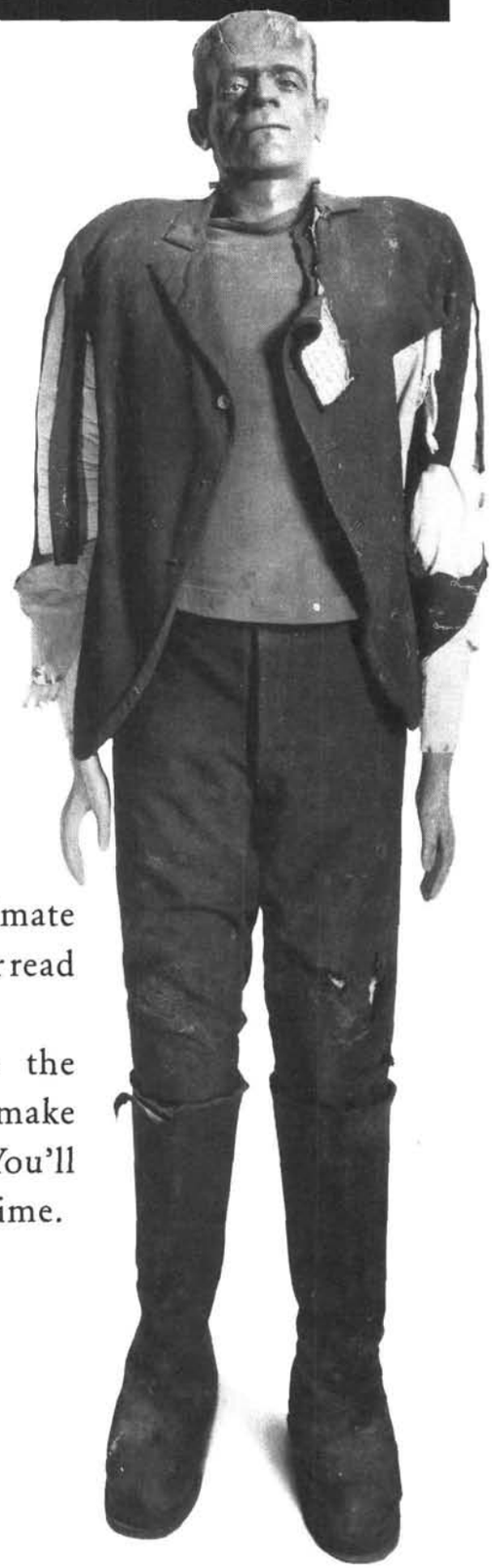
**Plus, the RSC goes dark, *Sun* readers, mothers in Art**

43
770954 236015

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF FILM AND TELEVISION.





There's one museum that takes you behind the film and television cameras to show you how everything is done.

The Museum of the Moving Image.

Here, you can see how special effects are created. How sets are designed and built. How animation is produced.

You can even animate a cartoon yourself. Or read the news on TV.

So, if you love the magic of film and TV, make your way to MOMI. You'll have a monster of a time.

**MUSEUM OF THE**

**MOMI**

**MOVING IMAGE**

*Open Tues to Sun and Bank Hols 10am–8pm. Closed Mondays.*
*At the South Bank, near Waterloo ⊖ Tel. 071-401 2636*

*MOMI IS A DIVISION OF THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Property of
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE LIBRARY
Big Sandy, Texas

RECEIVED
JAN 15 1991

# CONTENTS

NEW STATESMAN & SOCIETY

**26 October 1990 Vol 3 No 124**
**New Statesman Vol 118 No 4006**
**New Society Vol 86 No 1449**
**ISSN 0954-2361**

©Statesman & Nation Publishing Company Ltd and Contributors
Foundation House
Perseverance Works
38 Kingsland Road
London E2 8DQ
Telex 28449 Fax 071-739 9307
Advertising 071-739 1645
Editorial/Administration 071-739 3211
Accounts/Subscriptions 071-739 1737

## Regulars

**Editorial** 4
The Tories' family problems

**Word-bites** 5
The Zeebrugge fiasco; Bush's budget shambles; sexy Jane Austen; So Farewell, Nigel Lawson

**Diary** 6
Sean French, plus verses by Roger Woddis

**Taking liberties** 7
Jolyon Jenkins on the end of government by chaps

**Steve Bell** 7

**Political column** 8
Stuart Weir on voting strategies

**Letters** 22

**Fringe benefits** 23
Colin Ward on the discreet charm of suburbia

**Public interest** 39
David Townsend explains how senior council officers are muzzled

**Endgames** 46
Competition; Graffiti by Paige; Chess

**Contributors** 46

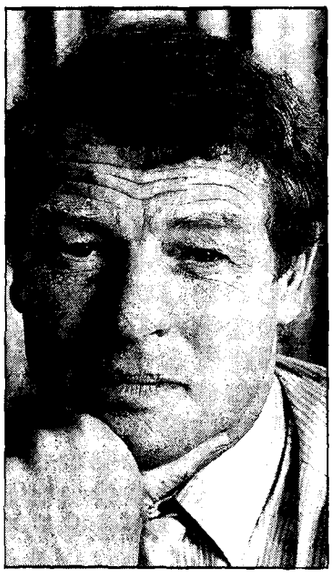
**Cover:** Don Fabio Oscoha, believed by drug enforcement agencies to be the godfather of the Medellin cocaine cartel. Ralph Gatti/Frank Spooner Pictures

## 10 The cocaine crossfire

While George Bush wages a phoney "war on drugs", coke-ravaged Colombia is torn apart by protector and pusher alike. Maria Jimena Duzan reports from Bogotá

## 13 Hearts and minds

Swinging *Sun* and *Star* readers could decide the next election: Bill Miller has the right riveting figures



## 14 Splashdown on Eastbourne

The Liberal Democrats have finally returned from outer space. But will their prospects burn up on re-entry? R W Johnson talks to Paddy Ashdown

## 19 Essay: The good between us

Oscar Wilde, D H Lawrence, W H Auden—all casualties of the English cultural tradition. Howard Brenton kicks against the invisible wall erected between the aesthetic and the political

**"Baby" by Felicity Allen, p25**

## Artefax 24

**Theatre:** the RSC goes dark
**Art:** old and new mothers
**Photography:** Janet Abrams on dancing for the camera; Elizabeth Wilson on London behind the city walls
**Travel:** signs of Singapore

**"The Invisible City", p26**

## Books 31

**Superior persons:** Peter Clarke on the aristocracy; Anthony Wright on Richard Crossman
**Foreign affairs:** sex and the Empire; paradise in Borneo; dissidence in China
**Start to finish:** Carole Angier on Virginia Woolf's beginnings; Anthony Quinn on John Updike's endings
**Plus:** women avengers; inner-city blues; Edward Blishen's India



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EDITORIAL

# Trouble in the family

*What was once a reliable guiding star in the Conservative ideological firmament is now leading the party astray*

The Conservative Party was once blissfully at ease with itself as the "Party of the Family". As champion of traditional family life, it felt safe and sound with the votes of women, whose role as homemakers and carers it wholeheartedly endorsed. Now the party is tormented by doubt as the old certainties slip away.

A decade ago, leading Tories could confidently claim that the family was the main defence of individual freedom against the evil of state interference. Today, the Conservative government is manifestly itching to get its hands on the fast-changing form of modern family life and beat it back into some semblance of its old shape. Time was when the Tories knew just where they stood on a woman's role in the family: she should stay at home and look after her brood. It was "natural", they said, it was what "the Good Lord intended". Now the Good Lord appears to be at odds with the market. Employers want women to go out to work and so, it seems, do most women. The government is finding it hard to serve God and Mammon.

There are deep disagreements within the party. On the one hand, there are the libertarian individualists, who say that of course women should work if they choose, and get to the top if they can: but if they choose to have babies, let them pay the price and don't come crying for help. ("Yes" to the nanny, "No" to the nanny state.) On the other hand, there are the conservative collectivists, who believe that women should be encouraged by public policy to stay at home; they hold that it's "good for the country" to defend traditional family life. And within the pro-family tendency, there are further warring factions: in a world where contraception is imperfect and chastity rare, the anti-abortionists are in conflict with those who maintain that single parent families are a threat to order and civilisation.

The majority of Tories clearly believe the state should do *something* to help families. But what? They have no real commitment to child benefit; on the contrary, the idea of a universal benefit cuts against the grain of modern Tory thinking. Yet they greatly fear the political consequences of scrapping it. This week's derisory increase of £1 per family is too little and too late. What should they do instead? Should they reward those who work (through tax relief), or help those most in need (through targeted benefits)? They cannot agree. In their zeal to break the mould of postwar welfare politics, they have failed to build up a new consensus, even within their own ranks.

They have come up with one idea, on which there seems to be broad agreement: fathers should be made to take financial responsibility for their children. In July, Margaret Thatcher announced plans to set up a new Child Support Agency, which will have the job of assessing and collecting maintenance from those parents (usually fathers) who do not live with their children and do not contribute voluntarily to the cost of their upbringing. The idea has some merits. Much will depend on the details of implementation. What will be the consequences if all mothers are forced to reveal the identities of the father, as has been suggested this week. How much maintenance will be clawed back from a mother's income support? How will the new arrangements affect the poverty trap, which deters so many lone parents from seeking paid employment? How will they affect a father's capacity to support a second family?

It is the only solid piece of action the government has promised in this troubled area of policy-making. Yet it has two serious weaknesses. First, there is no evidence that enforced payment of maintenance can relieve the poverty suffered by most one-parent families. The truth is that few fathers can afford to pay more than a pittance, especially if they have other families to support. Second, the plan endorses the idea that male responsibility in families is primarily about *financial support*. It locks men into their traditional role as breadwinners who are effectively exiled from their children, and women into their traditional role as carers who are economically dependent either on men or on the state.

Children need fathers whose commitment to care for them (at an emotional not just a material level) will endure beyond separation and divorce. They need mothers who can provide as well as care. If the government was genuinely interested in supporting families, its main aim would be to ensure that men and women could combine paid employment with active parenthood. Rather than expecting family life to revolve around employers' requirements, the goal should be to organise employment around the needs of families.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Death duties

Those who hoped the Zeebrugge trial would be the first successful prosecution of a company for manslaughter were always indulging in a certain amount of wishful thinking. The enormity of the disaster may have blinded them to the very high legal and evidential hurdles the crown had to jump. It was necessary to prove that someone knew, or ought to have known, there was an "obvious and serious risk" of death; and that that person was sufficiently senior in the company to count as a "controlling mind". Unlike some recent major disasters, there were just too few previously recorded incidents of going to sea with the bow doors open for anyone to have known that the risk was "obvious".

It was apparent from the committal stage that if the crown wanted to make its charges stick, it would have to come up with better evidence. This it signally failed to do: it took only three more statements from P & O captains (which tended to exonerate rather than damn the company), and commissioned no expert witness evidence.

Convicting a company for manslaughter is a largely symbolic act, since a company cannot go to prison. But it may be the only way of getting at those at the top. If P & O had been convicted and dealt a swingeing fine, how long would its shareholders have allowed Sir Jeffrey Stirling to remain as chairman?

It's important, then, that the Zeebrugge failure does not inhibit the crown prosecution service from bringing cases in future. For the real scandals are not the mass disasters which, almost by definition, only happen once, but the everyday industrial deaths caused by obvious, serious, and eminently preventable risks.

As for company directors, they should be given clear legal duties—analagous to their current fiduciary duties—to ensure their companies are operating safely, and correspondingly heavy penalties if they breach those duties. The buck must stop at the top, but at the moment it hardly gets near.

# Another fine mess

Whatever happened to Derek Hatton? One theory has it that he crossed the Atlantic, put on a Yale accent and became President of the United States. In the US budget shambles, George Bush has been acting like a cornered town hall Trot. Not content with running a deficit huge and wild enough to make Liverpool council look like the Bundesbank, the President then started to throw tantrums (such as shutting the Statue of Liberty and Grand Canyon) straight out of the Militant handbook of futile gestures.

By the end of this week, the posturing should stop. Republican administration and Democrat-controlled Congress are on course to fix a deal that will slice $40 billion from next year's projected $294 billion gap between Federal income and spending. Since Bush can't face the November mid-term elections with the country's finances in turmoil, the Democrats have got the best of the haggling. Tax hikes, such as an agreed rise in marginal rates for the rich from 28 to 31 per cent, have already made mincemeat of his famous pledge. We read his lips, and he was fibbing.

The chasm between the intrepid scourge of Saddam abroad and the peevish bumbler at home has never been greater. So wise heads in the west have shaken. They whisper that what a president with global pretensions needs is a sidekick (preferably not J Danforth Quayle) to mind the shop and carry the can, as premier Michel Rocard does for François Mitterrand in France. But harmony is, after all, a very minor virtue. Subjects of the world's most watertight "elective dictatorship" can only envy the rude health of US constitutional principles. Even the prospect of foreign war has done little to muzzle the legislature's bark and bite. When he talks about defending democracy, the man in the White House means a system that sometimes gives him the glamour of Stan Laurel and the authority of Oliver Hardy. Downing Street, please copy.

# Pride and priapism

It is a truth universally acknowledged that a man in pursuit of a contract to write a television series must be in need of publicity. Andrew Davies, writer of the much-praised BBC series *A Very Peculiar Practice*, is now adapting *Pride and Prejudice* for London Weekend Television. His version will, he has said, feature scenes between the sheets which were present, if at all, only between the lines of Austen's original: "There's a lot of pent-up sexuality in Jane Austen's work and I have let it out. What Jane Austen refers to as social intercourse is, in my version, a bit more like sexual intercourse." So Darcy will be seen getting out of his bath, and Lydia will not just shockingly elope with Wickham but will be seen in bed with him.

We face here what Jane Austen would not have called a nexus of issues. Television dramas need to be spiced up to get publicity, but there is also a quite respectable tendency to rethink old works, foregrounding sub-texts, to mix jargon. Quite inappropriately, the novels of Jane Austen, encouraged by the ninnies of the Jane Austen Society, have become symbols of anodyne gentility. In reality she was our most unillusioned chronicler of a society in which young women were in a sexual and financial market for which their own bodies were the waning asset.

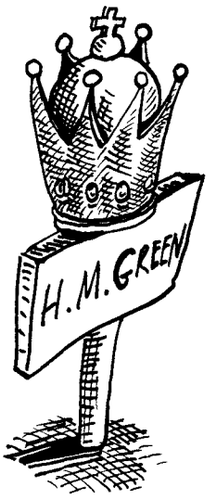
One should feel no nostalgia for the society of Jane Austen's novels: the frocks and bonnets barely conceal a brutal world in which the successful women are those who know their own market value and in which sexuality is a permanent preoccupation. The most likely problem with Andrew Davies's series is that it won't be shocking enough.

# Unassailable, at last?

Nigel Lawson was in turn brilliant, unassailable, arrogant and expendable. He fizzed as Chancellor of the Exchequer and then went as flat as the economy. We are unlikely to hear much more from him in the House of Commons before he quits politics at the next election.

He will be remembered with some fondness for standing up to the Prime Minister. Is this deserved? On his own account, rendered with some vanity at Westminster this week, he clashed with Thatcher over entry into the ERM in 1985. She won hands down. He insists today that her stubbornness was "a tragedy", but he stayed on in his post and happily basked in his reputation as Thatcher's miracle-worker, who secured electoral victory for her in 1987. Only when she publicly humiliated him did he strike back.

It's thanks to his inflationary policies that we are now being told to keep wages down. He, meanwhile, has more than doubled his pay by taking on part-time City jobs. But will Lawson, like John Nott, fade into lucrative obscurity? His speech in the ERM debate sounded remarkably like a job application. Under stage two of the Delors plan, which he supports, the Bank of England would become independent. Lawson for Governor? We told you first.




**Princess Anne, fined once more for speeding, confirms the royal penchant for high-octane gas guzzling. But as far as the *Daily Telegraph* is concerned, some members of the House of Windsor are beyond reproach. "The Queen's green credentials will be enhanced," it reports, "by the disclosure that she spends more on the purchase and upkeep of horses and carriages (£165,000) than on cars (£73,000)."**

**Because of problems at our printers, 5,000 copies of last week's issue were sent out late to subscribers. We are sorry for the delay and thank you for your patience.**



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# DIARY

*Sean French*

**My thoughts on the recent cremation of my uncle have attracted some macabre comment from two readers, both, incidentally, doctors.** One informed me that corpses cannot be burned with pacemakers in place because the heat of the fire causes them to explode and to damage the furnace. (Crematorium staff remove the devices themselves.)

More bizarre still, I have received a partial and alarming answer to my musings on what happened to the gold in people's teeth. It was apparently reported in a recent number of a Canadian medical journal that a man had developed a tumour under his wedding ring. The gold was discovered to be impregnated with radioactivity, which had been bombarding his finger ever since his wedding.

The explanation for this can only have been that the gold had previously been used in a form of cancer treatment which involves inserting the radioactive gold into a tumour, where it remains for years. It seemed that in this case the treatment had failed and the patient had died. At the crematorium, the resulting little lump of gold had been mistaken for an old filling and had been sold to a goldsmith, who turned it into a ring with Tolkien-like malign powers.

**Those are two grim little tales, but appropriate in the way that they link two rites of passage.** In Rudyard Kipling's *Something of Myself*, one of the most secretive autobiographies ever written, the author begins Chapter 5 as follows: "Then down to Bombay where my *ayah*, so old but so unaltered, met me with blessings and tears; and then to London to be married in January '92 in the thick of an influenza epidemic, when the undertakers had run out of black horses and the dead had to be content with brown ones."

It's wonderfully typical of Kipling to throw away two of the most important events of his life—his farewell to India and his marriage—in favour of a grim anecdotal detail. (Would any other writer have noticed the professional detail of undertaking practice at such a time?)

Last week, six months or so after deriding the importance of rites of passage in this very column, I got married myself in a discreet ceremony at Hackney Town Hall. I've been to a few weddings before, but I'd never quite appreciated what an odd process it all is, both cumbersomely bureaucratic and absurdly lax. It chiefly involved taking forms between Hackney and St Pancras town halls and handing over money (the only instruction I was given for the happy day itself was to arrive on time and to have £16.50 in cash in an envelope).

Curiously enough, the only documentation required was the final decree of her divorce, a document whose solemnity had been somewhat violated by having been used for drawing on by one of her children. In fact, it's now clear to me that bigamy is one of the easiest crimes to commit. All that is necessary is that each partner adopts the name and address of an elderly unmarried person living in their borough.

It was easier in the American state of Indiana when my parents were married there in the late fifties. Clergymen had been in short supply out in the wilds of the mid-west, so all that was necessary for a marriage to be official was that a couple announced that they were married in front of five witnesses.

We do have some enforceable rules, though. In America you can be married in a swimming pool or while skydiving, but in Britain you have to be in a designated building. What I hadn't realised is that the doors of the room in which the marriage takes place have to be kept unlocked, suggesting a world of eighteenth-century novels in which rakes kidnap helpless virgins and are married by drunken clergymen while the wronged family batters at the door.

Nor had I realised that the banns are literally posted, notice of the intended marriage stuck up on the wall with a drawing pin, to give an opportunity to someone who might object to the union; though the chances of such a person also happening to wander through the register department of a town hall must be remote.

The night before a wedding is meant to be a sordid occasion but I had a very decorous evening with my brothers. The only moment of squalor was at the end of the evening when we were playing old records in a maudlin sort of way. For the first time since the mid-seventies we listened to an absurd song by Deep Purple ("Highway Star") and for the first time ever we actually listened to the lyrics, in which the narrator celebrates his skill at manipulating his car and his girl. I thought it was great when I was 13; it now sounds like a fantasy by someone who repeatedly fails his driving test.

**I generally feel uncomfortable at church weddings in which godless friends of mine swear to raise their children in Christ for ever, and so I approved of the austere, brief and thoroughly serious proceedings at Hackney.**

Not entirely serious, perhaps. I was marrying Nicci Gerrard, a journalist who recently worked on this very magazine. (Someone commented sourly that it is the first time anyone has managed to integrate the front and back halves of the *New Statesman*.) Neither of us had thought to tell the registrar that we didn't use the names that appeared on the official form. Thus our bemused families suddenly found themselves witnessing a marriage ceremony between someone called Julian (which is, I must confess, my real first name) and Nicola.

I ought to say, for the benefit of my more radical readers, that this is a thoroughly right-on marriage. There was no nonsense about changing names or promising to hand over property, obey anyone or, in fact, so far as I could see, do anything at all. I'm even worried about using words like "wife", in case they should turn out, as they probably will, to derive from a word in Old Norse which means something like "insignificant chattel which is of less importance to me than my lowliest wart-hog".

In fact, the registrar committed a major *faux pas* when he concluded the ceremony by offering his congratulations to "Mrs French". There was a brief assumption that he was congratulating my mother for some reason, until the full horror of what he had said was understood. There were actually some muffled jeers from behind me, not only because of the cruel patriarchal slander but also at the arrogant assumption that congratulations are appropriate for a woman who has been shackled to a man. And in Hackney, too, of all places.

ROGER WODDIS

## Letters patent

*According to a Dutch newspaper, British soldiers in the Gulf have invented a new use for condoms, supplied free by Virgin, as covers for their guns to keep the sand out*

When Tommy humps his heavy gear
To hot spots on the map,
It isn't thought of *bint* and beer
That motivates the chap:
Whatever stories you may hear
The Dutch are sure to cap.

We know each squaddie over there
Who's sweating in the sun
Will brave the worst and do and dare,
Until the battle's won,
And will protect, with rubberware,
The barrel of his gun.

Your Virgin soldier's one desire
Is to defeat the sand,
And for this purpose will acquire
Whatever comes to hand:
His weapon must be sure to fire,
If he's to make a stand.

His story may be short, and end
In glory or a wreath,
And though survival may depend
On God and Edward Heath,
At least he knows the soldier's friend
Is safe within its sheath.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# TAKING LIBERTIES

*Jolyon Jenkins*

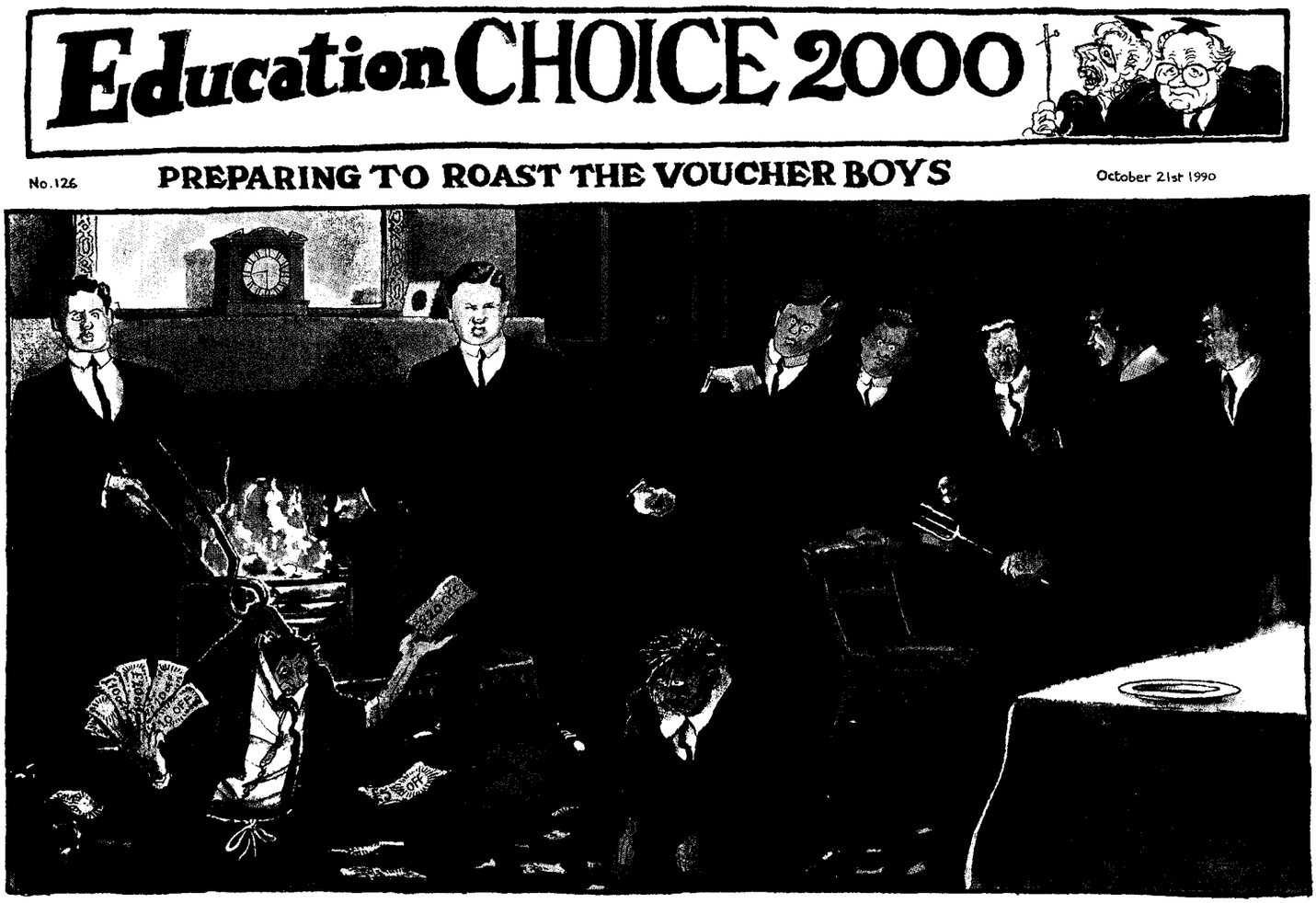
For connoisseurs of Britain's murky constitution, clause 13(4) of the BBC Licence and Agreement is something to treasure. It gives the Home Secretary the power to require the BBC "to refrain at any specified time or at all times from sending any matter or matters of any class". (There is parallel power in respect of independent broadcasters.) It is diverting to speculate that, when banning something, the Home Secretary could also include a ban on reporting the ban. When the Saudis kicked up a fuss about *Death of a Princess*, the British government's hand-wringing denial that it had any power over broadcasters was pure tosh.

Of course, the power has hardly ever been exercised. Traditional British government doesn't work like that. The broadcasting institutions, like Whitehall, have been run by *chaps*, who know the importance of acting "responsibly". During the Cyprus crisis of 1958, the government was anxious to keep Archbishop Makarios off the airwaves; Charles Hill, then Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, visited the chief assistant to the BBC's director general for what he called "one of our informal chats". The BBC refused to give in to pressure, but assured Hill that Makarios would get "severe hostile questioning". Thus, responsibility saved the day.

All this is well chronicled in a new study by the University of Glasgow Media Group (*Speak No Evil*, £10 and well worth it), which looks at the most recent and notorious ban, that on Sinn Fein representatives. The broadcasters were annoyed, not just because they had been censored, but because Douglas Hurd, that quintessential chap, had behaved in such an un-chaplike way. It was all *unnecessary*. According to David Nicholas, editor of ITN: "British public opinion has never been more resolute than it is now, in my opinion, in defeating terrorism, and that owes a lot to the full and frank reporting that we've been able to conduct on Northern Ireland." The Glasgow researchers find Sinn Fein was hardly ever reported before the ban, except in the context of violence, and journalists' questions were overwhelmingly hostile.

Once the ban was in force, the broadcasters proved remarkably accommodating. Lord Donaldson, the Master of the Rolls, has argued that if broadcasters took enough trouble they could "totally defeat" the ban, but they have backed away from confrontation. Confidential minutes of BBC policy meetings obtained by the Glasgow researchers show that it was decided to downplay "health warnings", which would alert the viewer that the report had been compiled under conditions of censorship. Blanket warnings at the start of a report should be avoided because they "could sound propagandist" and "it was important to avoid frivolous or point-scoring references." It was decided not to use subtitles on local news because "it looked so dramatic."

Nor have the broadcasting organisations challenged the ban in the courts—even though Channel 4's lawyers think they would stand a good chance of winning in Europe, and the BBC has apparently received similar advice. Instead, legal action has been left to individuals, supported by hard-up organisations like the National Union of Journalists and the National Council for Civil Liberties. The era of government by chaps having chats may be over, but has the fact registered with the broadcasters?






LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POLITICAL COLUMN

# Split loyalties

*Labour doesn't like tactical voters, but they may yet prove to be Kinnock's best friends*

*Stuart Weir*

I am a Labour voter. I live in the safe Labour seat of Hackney North and at the next election I shall vote for a Labour candidate who is bound to win. If I lived in Eastbourne, however, I would have voted Liberal Democrat at the by-election and would do so again at the general election; just as I would vote Liberal Democrat in 1991-92 if my home were in Richmond, or Scottish Nationalist (well, I am a Scot by birth) if I lived in Galloway.

Neil Kinnock and Paddy Ashdown should be pleased that there are people like me about. For we represent their best chance of removing Mrs Thatcher from power at the next election—even though they both disavow us (Kinnock more honestly, and with more reason, than Ashdown).

Eastbourne has signalled two significant political phenomena. The first is the profound unpopularity of this government. This isn't simply the result of its mishandling of the economy, to be put right by lower inflation and interest rates some time next year. The exit polls showed that people fear for the future of public services, like education and the NHS. The Tories' game plan was to raise their standing in the polls to the 40 per cent threshold through Major's bold ERM/interest rate stroke and an upbeat party conference. But they remain stuck at 35-36 per cent and have now suffered a demoralising blow.

The second phenomenon is associated with the first: tactical voting. In Eastbourne, Labour supporters voted to defeat the Tory candidate rather than for their own candidate, raising the possibility of a popular anti-Thatcher front voting tactically for the best-placed alternative candidate at the next general election. It is hard to measure the potential of tactical voting at the next general election. But at least there is a precedent. For tactical voting played a significant role in drastically reducing Tory representation in Scotland in 1987; the Tories are now under-represented there just as Labour is in the south of England.

If Mrs Thatcher proves to be as unpopular in England as she is in Scotland, then tactical voting could be the key to her downfall. It ought, of course, to be able to rely on the next election to remove from office a Prime Minister that the majority of people don't want. It is a shaming measure of the inadequacies of our electoral system that we cannot. First-past-the-post voting works only in a two-party system and we have at least two and a half parties in England (and more in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). The Alliance's short-lived surge in the mid-1980s and its spectacularly bitter break-up temporarily disguised the fact that the Liberals have, in normal circumstances, consistently been able to command some 15 per cent of the national vote in general elections. The split with Dr Owen is now past history and the Liberal Democrat performance in local elections and at Eastbourne suggests that they are likely to perform far better in 1991-92 than current opinion polls show. With the boost that Eastbourne will give them, they might well be on course for around 15 per cent of the national vote again. As ever, they will also do significantly better in the seats where they are the real alternative to a Tory incumbent.

*It's too late for Labour to endorse two-way tactical voting. But the party should try to benefit from it*

Quite what effect a stronger Liberal Democrat challenge will have on the fortunes of the two major parties remains uncertain. Quite small shifts in voting patterns between the parties can trigger major gains (and losses) in seats. But there is an evident danger that in the seats that matter—about 50 or 60 in all—a renewed Liberal Democrat presence might well split the non-Tory vote once again and return Mrs Thatcher to power with substantially less than a majority of the popular vote.

Tactical voting is an attempt by ordinary voters to outguess our clumsy electoral system. It is in that sense an effort by citizens to assert their democratic rights. In 1991-92, it might well be directed towards trying to avoid a damaging split in the anti-Tory element of the non-Tory vote.

Traditionally, Labour Party managers have been hostile to tactical voting, and with reason: for it has normally benefited Liberals at their expense. In 1987, it was reckoned that the Alliance would gain twice as many votes from Labour as Labour did from them. Pollsters haven't recently measured the differential, but the chances are that Labour's new look will have righted the balance. (The two parties are closer than ever on most significant policies and Labour is indeed notably more cautious now than the Liberal Democrats.)

After Eastbourne, Frank Dobson was put up by Labour to bang out the old refrain: *only* Labour can beat the Tories. Leave aside for a moment the blatant (and unattractive) special pleading there. For the big question is: can Labour beat the Tories *on its own*? Or rather, will the Tories contrive to throw away a huge electoral advantage and let Labour win? For Labour has to win 97 extra seats to gain an overall majority; to do so means winning 34 seats where the Tories have a majority of more than 6,000 and overturning 20 per cent Conservative majorities in places like Waveney and Watford.

Labour's go-it-alone strategy therefore depends far more on the government bungling it (and no one now should rule that possibility out) than on Labour cracking it.

With candidates already in place, it's too late for Labour to endorse two-way tactical voting. But Labour ought at least tc maximise its own ability to benefit from it. The single most important move it can make in this direction is to declare for electoral reform. Recent poll evidence suggests that this one move will have more positive electoral impact on non-Labour voters than any other. Mori polls for the Electoral Reform Society suggest that it could produce a pro-Labour swing of 3 per cent across the electorate as a whole; and that a committed pro-democracy stance could double that swing in the marginal seats that Labour has to win.

Labour ought to make this move anyway, both in principle and in its own long-term interests. As Patrick Dunleavy has conclusively demonstrated, our present electoral system gives the Tories a huge advantage and has made them one of the most successful parties of the right in any liberal democracy ("Send her victorious", 16 September, 1988).

Labour politicians who argue that first-past-the-post voting gives Britain strong government are right. The problem is that it is strong *Tory* government.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# This community owes you money. Should you demand your pound of flesh?

Should hard-working, hungry people really be forced to 'tighten their belts?'

Should the Third World be giving the West more in debt repayments than we give them in aid?

Should 500,000 children every year have to die because of a bank loan?

Should British banks really be taking millions of pounds every year from the world's poorest countries?

Should you wish to learn more about the Third World Debt, send for our information pack.

Should you wish to help the Third World, why not write to your bank or your MP?

Should nothing be done, the situation will continue.

To: Christian Aid, PO Box 100, London SE1 7RT (Tel: 071-620 4444). Please send me your free information pack on Third World Debt.

Name _____ Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

I enclose a donation of £ ____ to help those suffering due to Third World Debt.
OR NONM6B

**Christian Aid**



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# The cocaine crossfire

*While decent America warms to George Bush's ineffectual 'war on drugs' rhetoric, a coke-ravaged Colombia is being torn apart by protector and pusher alike. Maria Jimena Duzan reports*

Ours is a bloody reality. While the world, stupefied, watches us on distant television sets, we are afflicted by a crime network that begins in the Andean countries—and extends across the world. It operates in the daily multibillion-dollar bank transactions of Europe and the United States—where cocaine profits are laundered and legitimised. It operates on the streets of major US (and, increasingly, European) cities, where a street dealer may turn over a kilogram a week and snort some of the profits himself. It can be found in the warehouses of international chemical firms, where more ether and acetone are produced than can be consumed by legitimate business. The excess is then shipped off through front companies by plane, ship, truck and canoe to the clandestine laboratories that need it to produce cocaine.

And it exists in the busy international arms market, where weaponry is sold without regard to any morality or principle, save greed, to the highest bidder: often to the drugs dealer who turns to killing my friends, relatives and compatriots.

Perhaps the world knows more about the interplay between the world economy and cocaine production than it once did. But the reality has been clear to us for some time: drug dealing is an international problem that goes far beyond the borders of a single, violence-prone country like Colombia. It is, and must be fought as, a problem of international proportions. The clarity of that premise notwithstanding, in practice the talk of international cooperation to fight drugs is still nothing more than ornamental rhetoric surrounding what is called the "War on Drugs". The reality is something else: that so-called war is nothing but a sham.

*$3.5 billion enters the economy every year from cocaine. The cartel owns radio, TV—and most of the nation's soccer teams*

Follow any Colombian when he or she travels from country to country, and watch how they are singled out and searched like criminals at airport checkpoints. And then ask for a frank appraisal from a drug enforcement agency in your country about how cocaine gets there: in shipping containers, in clandestine flights, in cigarette boats that burn out their engines on a race from ship to shore; a thousand different ways—the least likely of which is the most visible, being carried into the country by hand.

Ask that same agent what percentage of those shipping containers are searched, how many of those private planes have been stopped. The truth is that the US has little idea of how much cocaine there is in the world. The drug enforcement officials of your country, the agents on the ground, have no hope of staunching the flow. In a world that is willing to swallow the lies that are propagated about the war on drugs, there is all manner of distortion. It's as if the war on drugs were being carried out in a Hollywood fiction: those who sell the guns; those who sell the chemicals, are on the side of the good guys; they are invisible, seldom seen. Those who use the guns are the villains of the piece. The only victims in the movie are those who are using the drugs.

But there are other victims. "Coca will remain part of our culture and the world can't tell us that we have to destroy that to protect it from drug dealing...there has to be another way," a Bolivian farmer in the Chapare valley, a prime coca-growing region, told me. Nobody has said that to prevent alcoholism in the world—a far greater problem in France and the Soviet Union, for example, than is cocaine abuse in the United States—one has to destroy vineyards and potato crops. And nobody is talking about making Coca-Cola a controlled substance, although that company was, in 1904, the first to commercialise the coca plant and its addictive qualities.

But perhaps the most serious distortion has come from successive US administrations, which tell their people that this drug war can be won principally outside the United States—where drug interdiction has failed—by means of repression in foreign lands. This remains evident in the anti-drug strategy of the Bush administration, which budgets 70 per cent of its anti-drug expenditure to foreign programmes and 30 per cent towards blocking consumption at home. All the methods that Washington can devise have been put to the test in Colombia, Bolivia and Peru. Yet, to date, there is no evidence that any of it has served to meet the main goal of US policy, blocking the entry of cocaine hydrochloride into the United States.

Colombia has taken on the extradition of dealers sought by Washington at a high cost—virtual war between the targets of extradition and the government. Bolivia and



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Frank Spooner Pictures

**Heavily armed narcotics forces raid a small cocaine laboratory in a routine "clean-up" operation**

Colombia have delivered themselves to US adventurism. Americans train and march alongside the narcotics police in both countries, but there is little sign that this will solve the concomitant problems of guerrilla violence in Peru and peasant discontent in Bolivia.

Will US policy makers ever learn that the drug problem in these countries is, above all, economic in nature? Without solving such problems, they threaten to unleash social and political conflicts without end. Today, Colombians confront much more than a group of drug dealers intent on pursuing their economic goals. Cocaine sales have exacerbated social and political conflicts in which ministers of state and peasants alike are threatened with death. Politicians, journalists, judges and priests, farmers and shoppers in downtown Bogotá, must all face the prospect of a sudden bomb blasting through their lives.

Narcotics has become a trigger for already simmering social conflicts in Colombia: the wages of drug money have penetrated our economy irreversibly. (It may be less acknowledged, but such is also the case in the United States.) As if the corruption weren't bad enough, the drug business acts as a stimulant to the political designs of the extreme right in my country—people who still see a communist conspiracy around them. In conjunction with certain members of the armed forces and wealthy landowners, they seek to destabilise and, through intimidation and co-option, seize control of the nation.

It was against this backdrop of bomb blasts, assassinations and massacres that Colombians, at times hobbled but managing to get there all the same, went to the polls on 27 May. They elected a president who vowed to keep fighting the drug dealers. His name is César Gaviria, and he was one of the survivors of a presidential campaign in which the most prominent candidates were killed. The campaign was the bloodiest and most painful ever seen in my country. In the end, as a colleague put it, "Colombians voted for the dead."

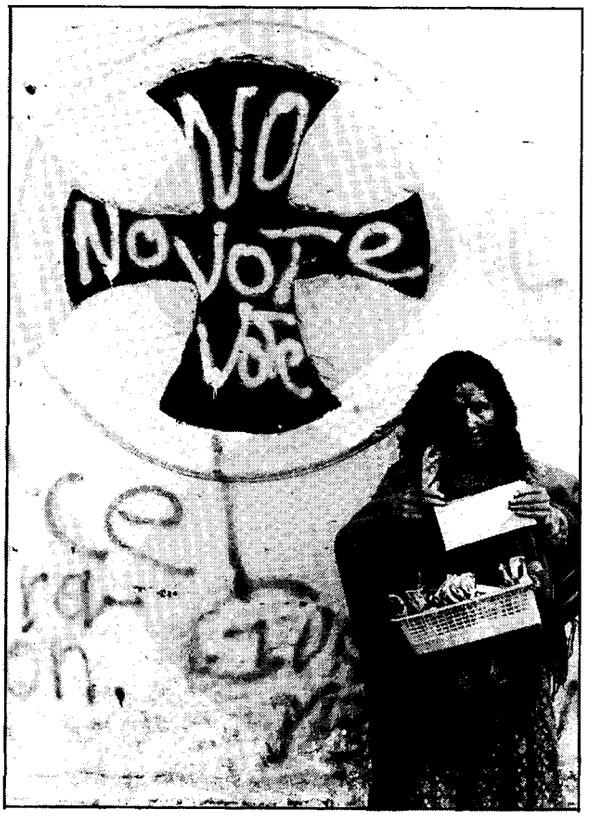
Yet it would be incorrect to say that Colombia is in its death throes. The amount of blood that has been spilled is testimony to the bravery of those who resist the imposition of a corrupt system upon them; despite the threat of death, they fight for the survival of the country. If a peasant leader falls, if a political leader is slain, another stands up to take on the fight; and if they kill that person, yet another will take his place. This dynamism persists, and gives the country a certain vitality, against all odds.

The cocaine business has defined many contradictions. The most dramatic is the monstrous enterprise itself, which crushes and kills without compassion—but which we also must admit is something that is home grown and uniquely ours. It is the product of a restrictive democracy that in the space of more than 30 years has failed to integrate the disenfranchised segment of Colombian society. The truth is that the drug traffickers joined forces easily in a country that was already on the brink of disaster. They filled, in a sense, a vacuum left by a political class more concerned with bureaucratic plunder than with answering the needs of the electorate. That is how Pablo Escobar was elected an alternative congressman in the state of Antioquía in 1982, when the extent of his crimes was already becoming common knowledge. And it was how another boss, Carlos Lehder (known for his devotion to the Beatles and to Hitler), created a movement that obtained representation in congress, under the banner of opposition to extradition to the US.

Thanks to the windfall arrival of drug profits, more than a



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED




**The No Vote insignia of the guerrillas urging a boycott of the elections in Bogotá**

few industrial leaders and landowners re-financed their business enterprises, especially in the agricultural sector. Many members of the military saw the cocaine bosses as strategic allies in their design to crush communism. The leftist guerrillas they fought, in turn, learnt to survive parasitically from the profits of the same system they once pretended to change. The Colombian Armed Revolutionary Forces (FARC) is the oldest communist guerrilla group in Latin America. Dedicated more to pillaging, extorting protection money, and to selling cocaine paste than to developing a modern political platform, it helped to create the breeding ground for the consolidation of the drug-paramilitary alliance. "Since the drug bosses arrived in the area, the region has not only become revitalised economically, but many landowners have been able to return to their ranches now that there is no more guerrilla presence," a landowner in the Middle Magdalena valley told me.

Only when the drug bosses decided to reap the benefits of the trade they had so carefully nurtured, did the nation begin, ever so slowly, to respond. In 1984, Rodrigo Lara Bonilla, the justice minister in the government of President Belisario Betancur, fell victim to an assassin in what is considered to be the first shot fired by cocaine dealers at the infrastructure of the country. We still had no idea what was to come. The monster could survive on its own. While the violence grew precipitously, the drug bosses had become wealthy and influential businessmen, bank owners and farmers, generating employment for thousands.

Like the Italian mafia, their enterprises straddled legal and illegal operations. They obtained, for example, the official franchise for the development of the state-controlled emerald-mining enterprises. Above all, they fulfilled faithfully an obligation that lulled the bureaucracy into complaisance: as their operation grew, they paid high taxes to the government and good salaries to their workers. According to Colombian economist Salomon Kalmanovitz, about $3.5 billion enters the Colombian economy every year as a direct result of the cocaine business, representing 7 per cent of the gross domestic product. Today, the drug mafia owns radio networks, television stations, hotels and drug-store chains—even a majority of the nation's soccer teams. In the past five years, the cartels have bought so much land, especially in those areas where there is no peasant discontent and a strong guerrilla presence, that it is no exaggeration to say that Colombia has undergone a cocaine-agrarian reform. Today, the drug dealers own about 2.5 million acres of agricultural land. The irony is that, despite the violence of their methods, they have saved the farm regions from a stagnant economic recession.

At the same moment that the winds of democracy blow across eastern Europe, we are progressively seeing the opposite in our countries. There is a silent incursion of military might into our part of the world. For us, the invasion of Panama fits the pattern: an invasion of 25,000 soldiers sent to capture a man sought on drug charges in the US. Thousands were killed. Six months later, the cocaine business continues in Panama almost unabated. Meanwhile, US forces are quietly moving in on Peru. They are in virtual control of official Bolivian efforts in the drug war. We have seen how Washington has increased its budget for the anti-narcotics military campaign, how it has doubled military aid to Colombia, tripled military aid to Peru. We are witnessing a change in international priorities on the part of the United States, which seeks other battlefields and other enemies now that the communist menace no longer has much currency. Until the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, at least, public opinion polls in the United States were saying that narcotics—and not communism—was now the greatest threat to national security.

Meanwhile, the only winners seem to be the major drug dealers: not only has the United States failed in halting the entry of drugs into its country, but, according to DEA sources, imports have tripled in the past six years. Every time a new entry route is discovered, the drug dealers abandon it and find yet another one, more sophisticated than the last. Thus are they now opening their business towards Europe and the Orient. Even some relative successes, like the decrease in cocaine consumption in the US, evaporated with the introduction of new drugs, especially crack, a highly addictive product produced from pure cocaine, which has invaded especially the urban ghettos. The victories are Pyrrhic; information supplied by the DEA shows that the wholesale price of cocaine has gone up once more in North America, which clearly makes the cocaine business more lucrative than ever (to the tune of $8 billion a year, according to available, though tenuous, statistics).

Today, the Andean countries are facing not only the social and political impact of drug dealing, but the progressive militarisation of our societies. Little effort is being made towards remedying the social ills we face, nor towards solidifying the economic and political needs of our amorphous and contradictory democracies. We are facing, as the Colombian saying goes, the dilemma of the dog and the flea: for trying to poison the flea, you can end up killing the dog.

"The war on drugs declared by Washington has been established beyond US borders to hide the massive failure in the policy to control international drug consumption," US drug specialist Bruce Bagley told me. Today, almost no one is shocked to know that the United States continues to be the world's greatest single consumer of drugs; that it is the recipient of half of global drug earnings; that it supplies 80 per cent of the arms legally purchased by the drug bosses in Colombia; and that, together with Germany and the Netherlands, it serves as a principal supplier of the precursor chemicals, without which cocaine could not be produced.

While cocaine consumption does not change and the economic lifeline of drug dealing is allowed to exist, this farce will continue, under the guise of the war on drugs. Every time a government minister is murdered in Colombia, or a bomb blows an aeroplane out of the sky, the United States will augment its military aid and the world will send forth messages of solidarity and condolence. How many more deaths must we have before the world realises that this is not Colombia's war alone? ●

**Maria Jimena Duzan is a columnist on the Bogotá daily *El Espectator* and specialises in drugs, crime and guerrilla assignments. A target for the drug paramilitaries herself, her home has been bombed, her newspaper office blown up and its publisher assassinated.**

**This article was written in conjunction with Equal Media, whose documentary *Behind The Cocaine War* goes out on Channel 4 on Tuesday 6 November in the *Official Eye* series. The film is dedicated to the writer Silvia Duzan and three peasant union leaders, all of whom were murdered during the making of the programme.**



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Hearts and minds

## *Nobble* Sun *and* Star *readers and decide the next government. Bill Miller has the right riveting figures*

There is a well-known correlation between the partisanship of newspapers and the voting patterns of their readers, but it is notoriously difficult to find convincing evidence that the press can influence the political opinions of its readers. The problem is that many readers choose their paper at least partly because they like its politics.

To measure the influence of the press, we need to follow a group of readers for a reasonably lengthy period of time, and see whether they change their political opinions. The British Election Campaign Study interviewed 772 voters a year before the last election, that is, in the early summer of 1986, then again in March 1987, and, finally, in the week after the election in June 1987. Each time we asked about their party preferences and, on the first two occasions, we asked them whether they regularly read a particular paper (defining regularly as at least three times a week). If they read the same paper in 1986 and 1987, we can classify them as "persistent readers" of that paper. No one suggests occasional exposure to the *Sun* will have an instant effect upon political opinions, but regular contact might.

Just over two-thirds of voters fell into one of six categories of persistent readers (or persistent non-readers): persistent readers of (1) the *Express* or *Mail*; (2) the *Mirror*; (3) the *Sun* or *Star*; (4) the *Telegraph*, *Times* or *Financial Times*; (5) the *Guardian*; and (6) persistent non-readers. A year before the election, *Guardian* and *Mirror* readers were strongly Labour; *Express*, *Mail* and *Telegraph* readers were strongly Conservative. Support for the Alliance was weaker among readers of the tabloids than readers of the quality press—all, perhaps, as expected. Rather more surprisingly, perhaps, *Sun* and *Star* readers (taken together) were split fairly evenly between Labour and Conservative, with the Alliance a fairly close third. Indeed, in our panel, *Sun/Star* readers were more Labour than Conservative in 1986.

*Sun/Star* readers were the least interested in politics and the least likely to tune in to highbrow news programmes such as *Newsnight*, *Channel 4 News*, or *Radio 4 News*. Most clearly of all, *Sun/Star* readers were uniquely uncommitted to parties. In 1986, fully 70 per cent of *Mirror* readers, but only 41 per cent of *Sun/Star* readers, said they not only had a party preference but regarded themselves as party "supporters". So there was a remarkable contrast between the relatively committed *Mirror* readers and relatively uncommitted *Sun/Star* readers, despite their similarities in terms of class and education.

It was a contrast with important implications for the future. Over the following year, *Mirror* readers proved relatively stable in their political preferences, as did *Guardian* and *Telegraph* readers. On election day, 84 per cent of *Mirror* readers voted for the party they had preferred a year earlier. Fewer *Sun/Star* readers had a preference in 1986; only 64 per cent of those who did stuck with it.

Overall, in our panel of voters, the Conservative lead over Labour increased by 10 per cent during the year leading up to the election. It increased by 17 per cent among *Express/Mail* readers, and 34 per cent among *Sun/Star* readers, but by a mere 2 per cent among *Mirror* readers. So, persistent *Mirror* readers held out against the general swing to the Conservatives, while the swing among *Express/Mail* readers was above average, and among *Sun/Star* readers it was over three times the average. *Guardian* readers swung primarily from Labour to the Alliance. *Telegraph* readers hardly swung at all. All of which suggests that the tabloids—but only the tabloids—were able to influence their readers' votes.

Throughout the electorate, the swing to the Conservatives was much stronger among voters who had relatively little interest in politics; or who did not tune into highbrow TV or radio news; or who lacked educational qualifications. The swing was particularly strong among those who, despite stating a party preference in 1986, nonetheless denied being party "supporters"—we can call them "uncommitted". In 1986, about half the voters were party supporters and half were relatively uncommitted, though most had a political preference of some kind.

*No one suggests occasional* Sun *exposure will have an instant effect upon political opinions, but regular contact might*

The influence of the tabloid press was particularly strong on the uncommitted. Among party supporters, the Conservative lead never increased by more than 10 per cent, irrespective of what paper they read; but, among relatively uncommitted voters, it increased by 28 per cent among *Express/Mail* readers and 50 per cent among *Sun/Star* readers. In sharp contrast, there was no drift to the Conservatives among uncommitted *Mirror* readers.

Since *Sun/Star* readers tended to be uncommitted voters, they were relatively easy to influence. But that is only part of the explanation for the magnitude of their swing to the Conservatives. The fact that uncommitted voters who read the *Sun* or *Star* swung so much more than other uncommitted voters, suggests that these papers were particularly good at influencing their readers.

The 1990 *Sun/Star* readers are once again more Labour than Conservative—as they were in 1986. Perhaps the born-again, toned-down *Sun* will not prove so influential this time, or perhaps it will try to exert its influence in a different direction, but *Sun* readers remain the soft underbelly of Labour support. Nobble that crucial constituency in an election year and you might effectively swing the election. ●



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Splashdown on Eastbourne

*So the Liberal Democrats have finally returned from outer space. But will the party burn up on re-entry? R W Johnson talks to Paddy Ashdown*

It's impossible not to like Paddy Ashdown. Partly this is because, like Neil Kinnock, he is a warm, open person whose very frankness can occasionally get him into trouble. But he also exudes a powerful sense of self-belief, a confidence he gets from the knowledge that he has come a long way in a short time. This is true in a simply factual sense—he's only been an MP for seven years and Liberal Democrat leader since July 1988. But psychologically more important is the fact that the Liberals were in a dreadful mess when he took over and have now recovered a great deal of the ground lost in the Alliance disaster.

"It's the third time in my life that I've had to take over an imploded organisation," says Ashdown. "It happened once in the Marines. The second time was in my constituency. But hauling the party around—that's the toughest thing I've ever done: like sailing a 100,000-ton tanker up the Channel and it'll only take the lightest of touches on the tiller. Mind you, if I had to give up right now as leader I'd be proud of what's been achieved."

We were talking on the day of the Eastbourne by-election, which Ashdown, however much he hoped, clearly did not expect to win. But he knew the result would be good—the Liberal Democrats had been recovering steadily ever since the local elections in May and were stealthily creeping up in the polls even before favourable reports began to flow in from the by-election canvassers. For a third party, visibility means a great deal and Ashdown, conscious of the enhanced role that modern media politics has given to the leader, has been striving to gain personal recognition.

*In politics you have to be standing in the right place under the plum tree when the plums fall*

"It's actually more important for us than for other parties—often the *only* thing people know about a third party is its leader. So—you have to compare apples with apples—we set out to equal the recognition levels David Steel had managed by his first general election." In fact, Steel never went higher than 60 per cent recognition before 1979, while Ashdown already has a 74 per cent recognition rating—and is now actually the only party leader with a positive rating (more people thinking a leader is doing a good job than think he/she is doing a bad job). Without doubt, Eastbourne will improve these ratings.

Ashdown's worst moment came with the 1989 Euro-elections when the Greens soared ahead of the Liberal Democrats, relegating them to a distant fourth place. "Just three days before the election I had a candidate in here saying things were really bad in her constituency. The pit suddenly fell out of my stomach as I realised, 'Oh God, there's going to be a real disaster.'"

What had he learned from it all? "Well, one thing is that green issues are on the agenda for good. We'd been trying to put them there, but in one election the Greens managed what we'd never done. Secondly, the fact that our vote could collapse like that was a dreadful warning. In the past we've been too dependent on protest votes, on surges of popularity stemming from by-elections and so on. I don't want that sort of support—it's so fickle. What we've got to do—what we have been doing—is to build a really solid base. That's how we got through the Euro disaster—it takes a strong party not to lose its head in a situation like that. But the other thing, you realise, is that in politics you have to be standing in the right place under the plum tree when the plums fall. It's no good shaking the tree to make them fall—it doesn't respond to that. Effort alone is not enough. You have to have the patience to wait around to be in the right place at the right time. Owen wasn't patient. He couldn't bear to wait around and so he ended up getting humiliated."

This last is said with a dismissive wave of the hand, which doesn't quite disguise a note of real dislike. When Ashdown talks of Thatcher it is of a malign force that has to be done away with: the tone is almost impersonal. A more sympathetic note creeps in to his voice when he talks of Kinnock, though he feels that Labour has an undeniable leadership problem. "It's the old story of the milkman's nag. Go round the street and ask who'd like to see the milkman's nag win the Derby and you find 70 per cent or more would like that. Then ask them to put their money on it and you get almost no takers. Kinnock's like that: no one much wants to put their money on him." This is said in a friendly manner rather than a disparaging tone: a sad fact of life. But Ashdown had to suffer a lot from Owen in a fairly personal way. You get the feeling that if Owen fell over a cliff, Ashdown might just



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

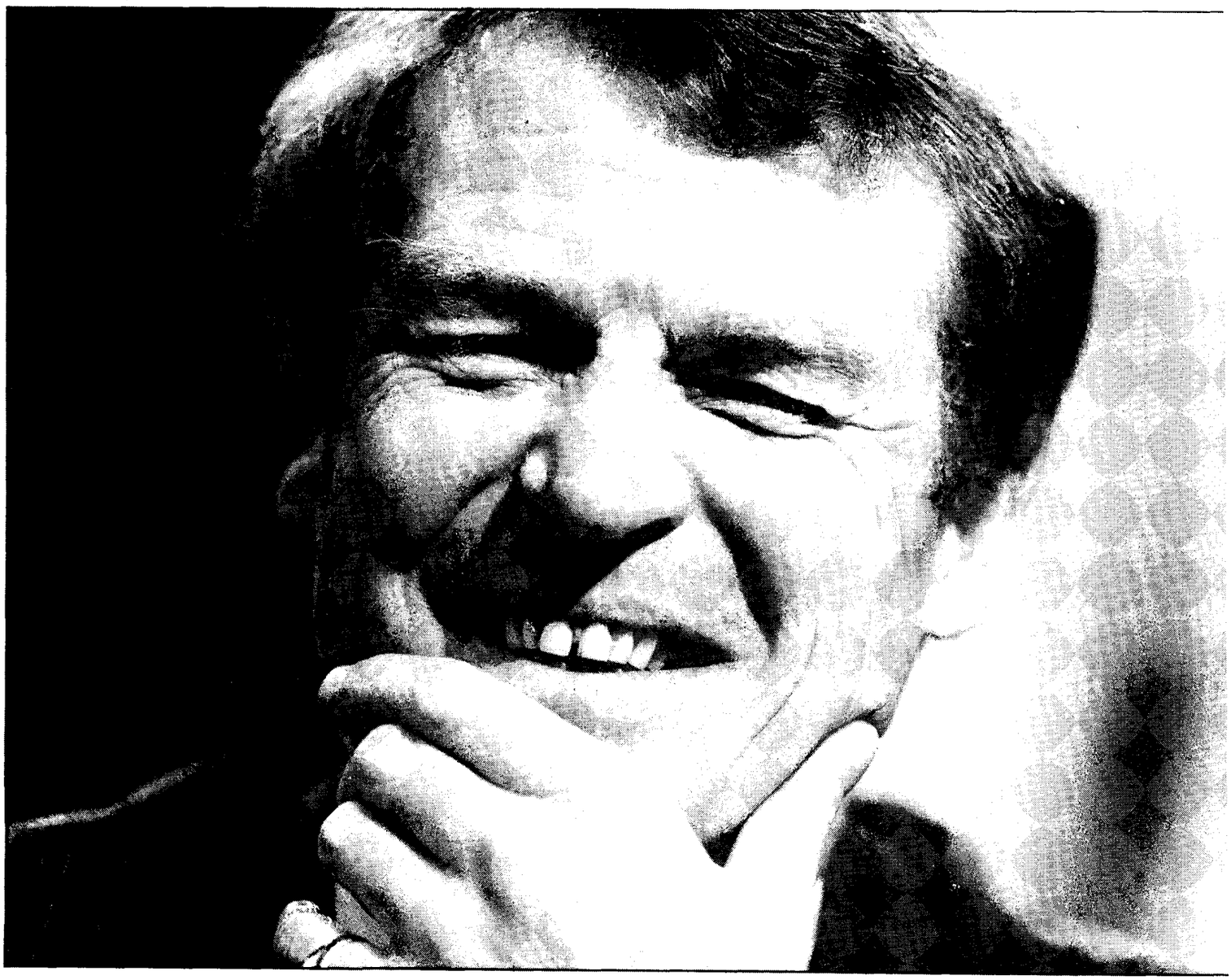
manage to toss a wreath down there too—provided the cost of the wreath could be met by public subscription.

But surely, I suggest, the Alliance represented the high point of third partyism—it was so successful that for a time it actually threatened to become the second party. Indeed, for seven months in 1981-82 the polls repeatedly showed it as the first party, leading both the Tories and Labour. Isn't one of the Liberal Democrats' biggest problems that their golden age seems to be behind them? Ashdown sighs as you recite this and says, "Yes, I know, I know, I know" as you get to the bit about lots of nice middle-class people having joined the Alliance because they thought it would be different—a pleasant, reasonable party, which avoided the tough in-fighting of the other two. The reality was prima donna behaviour, leadership struggles, splits and bad blood. Of the Gang of Four not one remains in active politics and one has actually emigrated. "A lot of people have been badly burned," says Ashdown sadly. "People who hadn't been in politics at all before joined the Alliance—and got burned. People like David Sainsbury got burned. But just think of someone who was in the Labour Party, left to join the SDP and then the Alliance; then got led up a cul-de-sac by Owen and then dumped. People like that just don't want to know about politics any more."

What went wrong? Ashdown's answer to this is "more or less everything"—he finds it hard to say a good word about the Alliance. It was a disaster, a mess, a mistake. "And I was part of that mistake. Early on I opposed it, but then, like just about everyone else, I got sucked in to it. I think now that you have to give credit to people like Tony Greaves who took a hard line against it all the way through. He said it was vacuous and he was right. When there were problems we just sort of glossed them over—the same mistake Labour is making now." Happily, says Ashdown, the British electorate is very forgiving: after a while it had even forgiven the Liberals for the Thorpe affair and now it was gradually forgiving the Liberal Democrats for the disaster of the Alliance.

*Labour has become simply vacuous. That's left a wonderful opportunity for us to become the party of principle*

So what had he learned from it all? "That Maggie's right about one thing—this is a time for conviction politics. That it's no good just cobbling together a coalition of parties: there has to be a coalition of interests and ideas. People say



Neil Libbert/Network



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to me, aren't I worried about Labour's move to the centre, but actually I'm delighted by it. In making that move, Labour has become simply vacuous. That's left a wonderful opportunity for us to become the party of principle. Look at the way we had the courage of our convictions over the Hong Kong issue, while Labour sidled in to the lobby behind Tebbit."

But what about his ultra free-market economics, his talk of privatising even the railways? Wasn't this just trying to out-Thatcher Thatcherism? It turned out that this was all about high principle too. The big difference, it seemed, was that Thatcher privatised things with the interests of the big capitalists at heart, while the Liberal Democrats would do the same thing with the interests of the consumer at heart. I couldn't see how this made much difference to the final result, especially since, if the Liberal Democrats ever got in to a position where they could carry out such policies, they would doubtless end up almost as subject to the influence of the big capitalists as the Tories. Such things have, after all, happened to Labour governments in the past. Think of Barbara Castle as Minister of Transport going for holidays on Sir Charles Forte's yacht—bought, no doubt, with the proceeds of Forte's Labour-bestowed motorway restaurant franchise.

Finally, said Ashdown, the Liberals were a lot bolder than Labour about constitutional reform. Not just electoral reform and a bill of rights, but the Maclennan draft of a written constitution, for which Ashdown professed considerable admiration. He knew I had criticised it for being too tepid, but thought I was wrong about that (for once his voice seemed to lack conviction as he said this, which may just have been politeness towards me). But as people in Charter 88 had found, I pointed out, drafting a constitution was a radicalising affair. People who had until then unthinkingly accepted the House of Lords or the monarchy soon realised, once they got down to drafting, that such monstrosities had no place in a modern constitutional order. At this Ashdown beamed and said that was fine, provided such radical change came welling up from below. Charter 88 could play an extremely valuable role in radicalising public opinion on such matters: however tenuous to the grasp, there was something in the notion of a "popular front of the mind".

*You get the feeling that if Owen fell over a cliff, Ashdown might just manage to toss a wreath down too—provided the cost could be met by public subscription*

But what of a proper popular front, the sort of Lib-Lab-Green alliance I had been advocating for the past two years in *New Statesman & Society*? About this Ashdown was understandably reticent: his main job, he felt, was to build a solid, coherent party, and to start getting involved in speculations about the compromises and deals of coalition politics was to risk foundering in a morass. In any case, he doubted the practicality of an electoral pact—his most searing memory of the Alliance was the agony of having to spend a whole year trying to get constituencies sorted out between Liberals and SDP. And the one future he didn't want for the Liberal Democrats was that of the German FDP, flip-flopping between coalitions with the two big parties. In a hung parliament, the Liberal Democrats would simply insist that, whatever else, Thatcher had to go. But it was far from certain that the party would want to be in a coalition of any sort—its eyes were set less on that than on a major breakthrough in the mid/late 1990s.

But if the Alliance had failed to make such a breakthrough, how on earth would the Liberal Democrats do it on their own? Well, the first thing was that the third-party vote had been increasing, albeit at an irregular tempo, ever since the 1950s and that trend was intact—indeed, the total third-party vote in the May 1990 local elections, at nearly 30 per cent was the highest ever. But Ashdown also feels that, whatever happens at the next election, there is likely to be a "major change in the political geography". That is, either Labour loses yet again and converts to electoral reform, or the Tories lose—and split. For Ashdown returns time and again to the fact that there are now "around 100 Thatcher ideologues in the Commons", men who will find it next to impossible to accept the more-or-less inevitable reversion to a "One Nation" leadership after Thatcher. This seemed rather a long shot to me. If Labour was reluctant to push for a popular front, why don't the Liberal Democrats seize the initiative in that sphere too? "These things have to come upwards from the grass-roots—and they are. The Scottish Effect—voting for the best-placed anti-Thatcher candidate whoever he or she may be—is spreading. In that way, the sort of front you're talking about could well become part of our future."

Given the way Eastbourne was voting even as we spoke, this seems rather prescient. (Afterwards, Ashdown was quick to emphasise his steady build-up approach—"we were not deflected by failure; now we must not be deflected by success.") But nobody yet knows quite what Eastbourne means except that third-party politics is back. Until 1981, the iron law of British politics was that a strong Liberal vote helped Labour by differentially taking Tory votes: this is how Labour won in 1964 and 1974. But the Alliance changed all that, splitting the opposition vote and helping Thatcher to landslide victories in 1983 and 1987. The situation is full of ironies: the Alliance talked tactical voting—but persuaded millions to vote anti-tactically and push Labour from second to third place in hundreds of seats. It also speculated endlessly about what to do in a hung parliament when its very existence made the chances of a hung parliament more remote than ever.

As the first post-Alliance third-party surge gets under way (and for all that Ashdown says, he's unlikely to escape the surge effect), Labour may again be the party with most to worry about. Ashdown believes that "perhaps the whole top 15 per cent of Labour support is soft—just anti-Thatcher votes looking for a home." Given that most of that 15 per cent are former Alliance voters who drifted back to Labour as recently as this spring, this is more or less bound to be true. But the key thing is the vast Alliance heritage of seats where the Liberal Democrats will now start in second place—49 seats in north and west Britain and another 192 in the south and east.

The collapse of the Labour vote in Eastbourne suggests that Labour's uphill battle in those 241 seats could well become hopeless—and Labour can gain no majority without winning at least some of them. This is why it will always be Labour that has to face up first to the initiative of a popular front. It is also what makes Jack Straw's remarks about Eastbourne the silliest uttered by any politician this week. Labour, Straw argued, need not worry about the Eastbourne result because it was typical of southern seats "where Labour is not in contention". But, of course, Labour was in contention—that's what putting up a candidate means; the real question was why on earth it did that and risked giving victory to the Tories. If Ashdown is right and the "Scottish Effect" is spreading, Labour would be better off doing a deal over seats like Eastbourne—while it still has something to bargain with. ●



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# The Brazil Ball

*Proceeds to:*
THE RAINFOREST FOUNDATION

*at:*
**The Roof Gardens**
99 Kensington High Street, London W8
*on:*
Friday, 2nd November 1990

*Featuring:*
Music by **Curiosity Killed the Cat** & others
DJ's: **Soul II Soul**
**Wendy James, Big Fun, Maria Whittaker**

*Tickets include:*
Champagne, Buffet & Breakfast
with Charity Auction & Casino

*To apply for tickets @ £45 per person contact:*
**HAHA Productions/RATTLE-ON LEISURE**
**(071) 376 4656**

**MICHAEL WINNER**
on
**CENSORSHIP**
at the
**National Film Theatre**
on
**Tue 30th Oct 8.45pm**

Michael Winner has had close and often confrontational contact with Britain's film censors since the 50s. In this illustrated **Guardian** *events* he will deal specifically with both the history of film censorship and how it is exercised today.

Some of the material illustrating Mr Winner's talk will not have been shown before – because it was censored.

To book your seat ring
BOX OFFICE 071 928 3232.

The NFT is a division of the British Film Institute.

# Freedom, Democracy and Socialism: The International Debate

# THE FOURTH SOCIALIST CONFERENCE

## Manchester 17th and 18th November Manchester Town Hall

A conference at which socialists, feminists and greens internationally will work together to renew the politics of liberation. The conference will take up two major challenges: that of a human and democratic economics against the new power of capital; and that of participatory democracy against the authoritarianism of the new international order.

Speakers include:- Sergey Anokhin and Vladmir Lepeokhin (Soviet Socialist Party) Tony Benn M.P. Heidi Bischoff Planz (German Green) Sonja Licht (Yugoslav feminist) Swasti Mitter (Indian Economist) Maha Nassar (Palestine) Ferenc Mislivez (Citizens Assembly Hungary) John Palmer (European Editor of The Guardian) Milan Nikovic (President Yugoslav Social Democratic Union) Freider Otto Wolf (German Green) Victor Amaya (FMLN), and Joost Lagendijk (Dutch Green Left).

Workshops will focus on economics relations on Saturday and self determination, political power and pluralism on Sunday.

Saturday Workshop speakers include:- Bruce Kent, Teresa Hayter, Ernest Mandel, Cynthia Cockburn, Jeremy Seabrook, Angela Phillips, Colin Ward, Diane Elson, Reg Race and Ursula Huws.

Sunday Workshop speakers include:- Thomas Mastnak, Branka Magas, Glyn Ford, Louise Christian, Marjorie Thompson, Tony Bunyan, Ralph Milliband, Hilary Wainwright, Monty Johnstone, Paul Foot and Jean McCrindle.

REGISTRATION: Members £10 (Unwaged £6)
Non-members £12 (Unwaged £8)

**Name** .....

**Address**.....

**Pay Cheques to Socialist Movement at PO Box 34 Manchester M60 1BW. For further information call 061 953 4013 or 071 837 6574.**

**SPONSORED BY CND, SOCIALIST CAMPAIGN GROUP, SOCIALIST SOCIETY, WOMEN FOR SOCIALISM, NATIONAL PEACE COUNCIL, T&G REGION 6, RED GREEN NETWORK, CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE ARMS TRADE AND THIRD WORLD FIRST.**



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# NEWSTATESMAN SOCIETY

An essential part of every thinking student's armoury. Stimulating, radical, wide ranging, it is above all a marvellous read - and an invaluable source of information and background reading.

Iconoclastic in approach, unattached to any political party or movement - though with a strongly egalitarian and libertarian bias - *NSS* brings together some of the world's finest writers. Its interests range from history to fashion, science to sport, sexual politics to bingo, literature to ecology.

*NSS* is internationalist in approach and is particularly strong on Eastern Europe, the Middle East and the USA with writers such as John Lloyd and Alexander Cockburn. It recently produced a special issue arguing strongly for a federal Europe.

*NSS* is particularly keen to develop its links with students. Society Today is the *NSS* section specially written for students. Every week in termtime, Society Today looks at a topic of particular interest to those studying social sciences, politics, history and related disciplines. subjects covered include analyses of the Poll Tax, the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill, juvenile delinquents, the future of the NHS, the death of ILEA, monitoring the police, the Social Fund, civil liberties, penal reform and illiteracy. Over the year, Society Today aims to give a concise, comprehensive analysis of issues at the leading edge of the social policy debate.

Please send me a subscription to **New Statesman & Society** and my free book (tick your choice):

(1)[ ] (2)[ ] (3)[ ] (4)[ ] (5)[ ]

Name.....

Address.....

.....

..... SU3

University/College.....

Graduation date.....

I enclose my cheque/postal order for.....made payable to New Statesman & Society, or please debit my Access/Visa/Diners Club/American Express card number:

Signature.....

I am a full time student studying in the UK or Republic of Ireland.

**Student rates** (UK): 6 months £20, 1 year £38, 2 year £70.

I would like my subscription to start on .....

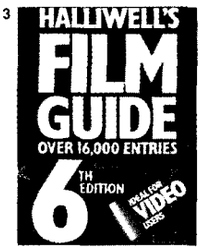
Send to: New Statesman & Society Subscriptions, FREEPOST, London E2 8BR (no stamp in the UK).

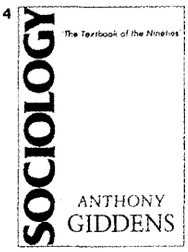
## STUDENTS – *Subscribe now and save over 50%*

### *AND get a book of your choice absolutely free*

1


2


3 


4 


5


If you are a student you can subscribe to *NSS* for a massive discount on the normal price. A six months subscription costs just £20, one year £38 and two years only £70 - savings of over 50% on the cover price. In addition, if you subscribe for one year or more you can receive one of the books listed below - absolutely free. Just take your pick.

*Subscribe for one year and receive either:*

**1. Rough Guide to Paris -** the inns and outs of the Cité. (Worth £4.95) *or*

**2. Rough Guide to Amsterdam -** ditto for Dutch treat. (Worth £5.95)

*Subscribe for two years and receive one of:*

**3. Halliwell's Film Guide -** the definitive guide to the movies. Over 16,000 entries. (Worth £12.95)

**4. Sociology by Anthony Giddens -** the textbook of the nineties. A must for the serious student. (Worth £9.95)

**5. A Gramsci Reader** edited by *David Forgacs - a collection from* the works of the 20th century's most influential Marxist thinker. (Worth £8.95)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ESSAY

# The good between us

*Oscar Wilde came to an ignominious end, Lawrence's brilliance fizzled out in risible mysticism, while the later Auden drifted on clouds of soporific religiosity. What is it about the English cultural tradition that does for so many political artists? Playwright Howard Brenton locates an invisible proscriptive wall that demarcates the aesthetic from the political*

*This is a shortened version of Howard Brenton's Cheltenham Lecture.*

Why did Oscar Wilde fall? It was not that he was particularly arrogant. Arrogance is thought to be as common among writers as obesity among barmen: but, usually, as with Oscar, it is not arrogance, but enthusiasm. People find enthusiasm very irritating in this country.

Nor did Wilde come to grief because he sought to make enemies. As Richard Ellman points out in his magnificent biography, among all Wilde's aphorisms there is not a gratuitously malicious remark. His most famous rude remark may be apocryphal, but even that is graceful. The story goes that when given a bouquet of rotten vegetables by his tormentor the Marquess of Queensbury, Oscar took them with a bow. "Thank you," he said. "I will treasure these forever. They will remind me of you."

Nor was he ruined because he was homosexual. It was not unknown for nineteenth-century gentlemen to have homosexual affairs; it seems to have gone with the way they were taught Latin and Greek, and a love of horse-racing. Lord Byron is very revealing on this: Greek boys astride a steaming animal's flanks, and so forth.

Oscar Wilde's "fault", or "virtue", depending on your point of view, was that he thought he was ahead of the mores of his day. He thought he could change the world. He thought he had English culture on the run.

He did not, of course. His innocence had made him over-confident. He got cut down. In Reading gaol, the chaplain would come into Oscar's cell every morning to sniff the air for the smell of semen upon the blankets. If the cleric detected the tell-tale odour, the prisoner's rations would be cut by half that day. That was the fate of the great, Irish libertarian, the scourge of hypocrisy, the paradoxical radical, the upper-class individualist who nevertheless wrote one of the great, eccentric texts of the left, *The Soul Of Man Under Socialism*. Oscar Wilde was destroyed at the moment he was making the change from being joker, to become joker sage—a critic of society, an enemy of "the status quo".

In English culture there is a Chinese wall between the aesthetic and the political. English writers who seek to breach that wall can have no end of trouble. They either get crucified on it—as Oscar did—or bash their heads against its bricks and go mad, or just give up and become drunks, or high Anglicans, or both. (I say "English" culture; they do not seem to have this problem in Scotland, nor do they in eastern Europe, or the Mediterranean countries, or in South America.)

Octavio Paz, the Mexican poet, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature this month, an occasion for celebration. For Paz there is no "cultural wall". Private love and the public horrors of history, the beauty of dawns and the dereliction of Mexico City intertwine effortlessly in his work. Paz wrote:

> Poetry is one of the means by which modern man can say NO to all those powers which, not content with disposing of our lives, also want to rule our conscience. But this negative carries within it a YES which is greater than itself.

No one in the Spanish world would dream of saying to Paz, "Go back to writing love songs, don't meddle in politics and issues..." Which is often said to writers in England. "Stop medd-


LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Oscar Wilde/Hulton-Deutsch

ling... just entertain..." is written on one of the bricks of our Chinese cultural wall.

Why did D H Lawrence, who began with *Sons and Lovers*, *The Rainbow* and the early short stories, as the author who should have written the great, poetic, social novels of the early part of the century, leave us for endless, unhappy journeys in Italy, Australia and Mexico? And, tragically for we who like reading books, why did Lawrence's work deteriorate so catastrophically, into the slapdash quasi-fascism of *Kangaroo* and the tangled, risible mysticism of *The Plumed Serpent*?

He ran headlong into the English Chinese cultural wall. He married a German woman in time of war. He was working class and hostile to the London cultural scene of his day, the Bloomsbury mafia. And he made an observation of life on earth, which is not unreasonable: that the matter of love and sex between men and women is at the centre of our experience. As he put it in his *Essay on Thomas Hardy*:

> In life... no new thing has ever arisen, or can arise, save out of the impulse of the male upon the male, the female upon the male. The interaction of the male and female spirit begat the wheel, the plough, and the first utterance that was made upon the earth.

*'Why in England do so many writers encounter a hysterical opprobrium when they make it?'*

Not unreasonable.

But... oh but... There is a whole section of bricks in our cultural wall, with glass sticking out to lacerate any who try to remove them (let me try to pull off this metaphor for you!)... bricks of mud baked hard by sexual repression. Lawrence got cut to pieces on this bit of the wall and lost his way. He was aware of his fate and tried to explain what it was about England that was destroying him, in his essay "An Introduction To These Paintings". You sense the hurt and anger, and a great and generous mind tipping over into nonsense. He wrote:

> The English... are paralysed by fear. That is what thwarts and distorts the Anglo-Saxon existence. It thwarts life, it distorts vision, and it strangles impulse, this overmastering fear... It is an old fear which seemed to dig into the English soul at the time of the Renaissance. Nothing could be more lovely and fearless than Chaucer. But already Shakespeare is morbid with fear, fear of consequences. That is the strange phenomenon of the English Renaissance: this mystic terror of the consequences, the consequences of action. What appeared to take full grip of the northern consciousness at the end of the 16th century was a terror, almost a horror of sexual life.

So... D H Lawrence felt that, unlike Heineken lager (to get this argument back into the everyday)... that he was denied reaching parts that Chaucer could reach without any trouble.

Lawrence's explanation of this "English Puritanism", this mind-body split, was bizarre. It was because syphilis ravaged Elizabethan and Jacobean society, distorting Anglo-Saxon culture forever.

For myself, I find this quite mad. But this was Lawrence at the cultural wall: he was trying to pass through it, from being a storyteller to being a moralist... and was slandered. He didn't make it. A noble mind went to pieces, under the pressure of, if you like, the unbearable heaviness of being English.

Was Lawrence the great novelist of the twentieth century we did not really have... or have enough of? I think so.

And... what happened to W H Auden?

I saw Sir Kingsley Amis on a television programme not so long ago, accusing W H Auden of cowardice—of running away from this country to America in 1939, because he thought Hitler was going to win, and, from then on, of writing rubbish. A bit rum of Sir Kingsley, I thought. Surely, it was in the first years of his American exile—or coward's retreat, if that was what it was—that Auden wrote us some of the great poems of the language: *The Dark Years* and the two magnificent elegies, *In Memory of W B Yeats* and *In Memory of Sigmund Freud*, which together are the twentieth century's equivalent to Milton's *Lycidas*.

But... yes, it is true that after the early forties, Auden's public manner becomes windy. The pressure has gone, he becomes like the late Wordsworth, drifting on grey clouds of a soporific religiosity. Unlike Wilde, Auden leapt on to the literary scene as a fully fledged social critic, loved and loathed at once. It was as if he was first heard on the top of our "Chinese cultural wall", shouting his head off.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What happened? Auden tried to tell us. There is a long poem, *New Year Letter*, written in 1940. It is a poem of anguish and confusion, both public and private, convoluted, even evasive. It is about being unable to be English any more, at, of all times, England's time "of greatest peril":

> The New Year brings an earth afraid,
> Democracy a ready-made
> And noisy tradesman's slogan, and
> The poor betrayed into the hand
> Of lackeys with ideas, and truth
> Whipped by their elders out of youth,
> The peaceful fainting in their tracks
> With martyrs' tombstones on their backs,
> And culture on all fours to greet
> A butch and criminal *élite*,
> While in the vale of silly sheep
> Rheumatic old patricians weep.

It was a terrible time for a great poet to despair. His epitaph could be "England unmade me".

Meanwhile, in my neck of the woods, the English theatre, the casualty wards are not a pretty sight. The whole first generation of Royal Court lions seems to have given up. Most writers, after the first exuberant flush of excitement in finding that they can entertain on the stage, or story-tell, or rhyme and scan and hold a public, undergo a shift, a sea-change.

But sooner or later, a crisis comes; what are the new jokes, the new scenes, to *be about*? And you fall to the bedrock of what being a writer means. To write well is no longer enough. The joker becomes a joker sage, the entertainer becomes a social critic, the pen becomes a sword.

So W B Yeats, not by nature a political soul, starts as an "art for art's sake", "Georgian" lyric poet, and by middle life finds himself writing *Easter 1916*, undoubtedly a great poem and undoubtedly political, a revolutionary republican hymn that can still raise English hackles. This transition is natural. But why, in England, do so many writers encounter a hysterical opprobrium when they make it? Why is the English cultural Chinese wall there?

I don't think Lawrence's psycho-sexual explanation works; it has to be read autobiographically, as about his own anger and frustration. I suggest historical reasons. We had our revolution early, in the seventeenth century, and we do not acknowledge it. We pretend that the Commonwealth failed, whereas everything it stood for came to pass. We have an absurd myth that modern "England" was founded by Elizabethans, when actually it was founded by Cromwell. This myth gives us a haziness about our nation, a smugness that "all's right with the world"—and they who say that, demonstrably, all is *not* right are said to be "unpatriotic", to have a chip on their shoulder.

Also, the European Romantic Enlightenment, which saw writers and poets as "the unacknowledged legislators of mankind", is not in our tradition. Rousseau and Goethe are not part of our mental landscape. For decades, the wars with Revolutionary France made it almost treasonable to read Rousseau. Goethe happens to be very difficult to translate—you read the doggerel of the Penguin edition, or even of Louis MacNeice's version, and you just cannot see why this is the great mind of the Enlightenment. And the one poet who could have become our Goethe—or even a nineteenth-century English Dante—Shelley, stupidly got himself killed while messing about with boats. Chance... Shelley died and we got Tennyson instead, poetry as highbrow Musak. (Cultural traditions, like historical events, are not inevitable; they are *made*, they need not have been necessarily so.)

D H Lawrence/Hulton-Deutsch

*"In my neck of the woods, the whole first generation of Royal Court lions seems to have given up"*

Culture should be, in Howard Barker's majestic phrase, "that good between us". Instead we have a mass of philistine assumptions that have "grown between us". We should be careful. A culture can turn nasty on us all, it can become censorious and anti-democratic, and viciously proscriptive: "*not* this kind of book, *not* this kind of play"; then audiences and readers cannot find their way to their writers and performers. The wall between the aesthetic and the political, against which so many English writers have been wrecked, is such a proscriptive.

What to do? Well... a wall has come down in Europe. Surely we can dismantle a wall that is really only in our heads. ●


LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# LETTERS

## In defence of pagans

In the century of the Holocaust, Pol Pot's genocide of the Cambodian population and of countless other atrocities, it is all too plausible that some perverts should take pleasure in abusing and terrorising helpless children in the manner described in Judith Dawson's article ("Vortex of evil", 5 October).

The "ritualistic" aspects of the children's ordeal are, however, totally irrelevant and I am relieved that the police had the good sense to keep them out of the court proceedings. What the children suffered would have been just as criminal if the perpetrators had worn street clothes, medical white coats or clerical garb. Abusing children and torturing anyone are crimes; dressing up and performing theatrical rituals are not.

Any emphasis on "ritual" in either the Nottingham or the Rochdale cases shows the influence of the Reachout Trust and other fundamentalist Protestant groups. They are trying to spread the lie that children are being sexually abused on a vast scale by "satanic" and "witches'" covens as a normal part of their religious rituals, and thus to spread prejudice and fear against any non-Christian form of religion.

Even if Judith Dawson was not influenced by them, some of her colleagues have been. Drs John and Elizabeth Newson, psychologists at Nottingham University, described some of the pressures put by some social workers on children to induce confessions of witchcraft as akin to brainwashing. In another case, a neighbour reported a family as potential child abusers because of books on occultism seen on its shelves, and social workers sent to investigate took the same line.

Up and down the country, fundamentalist vicars are now denouncing local pagan and occult groups as fronts for child abusers, without a shred of evidence. Geoffrey Dickens, MP, in introducing his private member's bill to reintroduce the Witchcraft Act last year, claimed that he was doing so to protect children against abuse.

Every year, there are half a dozen cases in magistrates' courts of sexual abuse of choirboys by their vicar, curate or priest. Yet, no one accuses the Church of England or the Roman Catholic Church of being fronts for paedophiles. Non-Christian religions, including paganism and witchcraft, are entitled to the same consideration. Northern Ireland, Lebanon and Iran stand witness to the appalling consequences for freedom and public security of any form of officially sanctioned religious bigotry.

*Frederic Lamond*
*The Pagan Federation*
*London WC1*

## Spiritualist scapegoats

Both Judith Dawson and Beatrix Campbell ("Vortex of evil", 5 October) accuse those who are sceptical of ritual abuse theories of being committed to safeguarding some cosy view of the safe nuclear family against a hideous and unwelcome truth. That is entirely the opposite of my own view. Child abuse has been exposed as a widespread menace, and most horribly as one that happens in outwardly normal homes.

What is, in fact, happening now over supposed ritual abuse is an equally groundless overreaction in the opposite direction. If we are not careful, child abuse will be explained away in the popular mind as the speciality of satanic magicians dedicated to evil, an explanation that leaves the cosy nuclear family intact. This would leave the vast majority of abuse perpetrators unscathed, and unjustly persecute a number of innocent people because of their involvement in "occult" spiritual activity.

To write of "ritual or satanic abuse" in one phrase is misleading. By "ritual" abuse, the authorities in Rochdale, for example, were referring to activities involving obsessive routine behaviour. These are hardly organised black magic. The children's disclosure pictures included clowns, sharks and Father Christmas. No esoteric group known to me takes such beings as totems, or god-forms, or even ritual personae in their ceremonies. On this evidence, it would seem that the abuse was not esoterically based but that the disguises were mere refinements used by a pornographic ring.

Judith Dawson writes that no one has been convicted in court of ritual abuse. Why should they be? Why should such a crime be invented? The psychological and physical abuse of children is already a crime, whether disguised as ritual, as affection, or as some other form of team game. I have yet to understand why people other than fundamentalist Christians should be made into a category all by itself.

By avoiding the pitfall that your author points out, that of disbelieving on principle women's tales of children's distress, let us not fall into the equal and opposite error of blaming what are, in truth, the crimes of a whole community on to some falsely victimised scapegoat group.

*Prudence Jones*
*Shelly Garden*
*Cambridge*

## Just sleeping with

I enjoy Sean French's column and he can say whatever he likes about me in it, but I must defend the sub-editors of the *Independent* magazine from his charge (Diary, 5 October) that they substituted the phrase "sleeping with" for "fucking" in my article on David Attenborough and the sexual habits of animals. What appeared was what I had originally written.

He is right, though, that censorship was involved: self-censorship to preclude later discussions with others. This may be prissy, but I don't think any writer or editor should casually ignore the genuine outrage that is felt by some readers when expletives appear: a reaction that completely distracts from their consideration of the article. Sometimes, it is right to shock. The *Independent* published Tony Harrison's multi-"fuck" poem *V* in full because, I assume, one of its games with language is the juxtaposition of "high" and "low" language. In the case of a jolly little magazine article about David Attenborough, it seemed to me a pointless violence to the tone and readership to talk about, say, animals "fucking and crunching each other silly". Therefore I used "creatures sleeping with and eating each other". The coy little euphemism (as Sean correctly calls it) was supposed to fit the cosy air of the piece.

Also, a newspaper like the *Independent* has a larger and probably more temperamentally various readership than the *New Statesman*. Sean French is lucky that you can let him write what the fuck he wants.

*Mark Lawson*
*The* Independent *magazine*

## Harsh judgments

It seems a little harsh of Helena Kennedy to contrast Lord Denning's view of legal rights unfavourably with that of D N Pritt (Books, 12 October). After all, Pritt was one of Stalin's foremost British apologists. Denning's determination to uphold wrongful convictions looks anaemic by comparison with Pritt's vocal support for the Moscow trials of the 1930s.

*John Spencer*
*St Anne's Park Road*
*London SW18*

## Indian rights

Lord Scarman's reference to the bill of rights drafted in the Indian constitution is not only misleading, but negates all his arguments for an English bill of rights ("Scarman speaks", 28 September).

The "most elaborate and brilliantly drafted bill of rights in the Indian constitution" did not, for instance, prevent Mrs Gandhi from introducing the State of Emergency with its draconian powers, as a result of having been disqualified by the election tribunal for malpractices during her parliamentary election campaign between 1975 and 1977.

In addition, the Indian constitution, in its practical application, has failed to guarantee basic civil liberties like entitlement to life or protection of property. Anti-terrorist legislation, popularly


LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

known as "black laws", in force in Punjab, Kashmir and North East India, as documented by Amnesty International, has produced dictatorial conditions—in contradiction to the whitewash of India as allegedly the world's "largest democracy".

*Iqbal Singh*
*National director*
*Sikh Human Rights Internet*
*London N4*

## Not seriously funny

David Widgery's review of Tariq Ali's "Redemption" was serious and excellent (Books, 12 October). It made a change from the contributions to the Tariq Ali industry that have passed for reviews elsewhere.

Widgery is probably correct to say that Alex Mango, Sugar Brink and Nutty Shardman will have the last laugh. But it is worth pointing out that, at least since Trevor Griffiths's *Comedians*, some of us on the left have felt that laughing is a serious business. Indeed, placed astutely in the right dialectical contradiction, laughter can change the world. Whereas the only thing Tariq Ali's book will change is his bank balance. It is not seriously funny.

*Keith Flett*
*London N17*

## THIS ENGLAND

£5 book tokens for entries printed. (Postcards please)

● The stun device was chosen after experiments with animals on mock-up entrances [to the tunnel] in France and Britain.

Mr Crowley said that, "the option of immediately killing animals with a fatal charge was not pursued because it would not be acceptable from an animal welfare viewpoint." After activating the system, rogue animals would be quickly caught and humanely destroyed in mobile cages, he said.—*Guardian* (Alan Tobias)

● Harrison is a no-nonsense toughie who has already assembled a staff of 110. Their job is to hand out up to £420 a year to any eligible student who asks for it. Harrison still finds this remarkable.

"This is not lending. This is giving money as part of an educational expansion programme. The fact that the student has to pay the money back is the only resemblance to a loan."—*Education Guardian* (Basil Ransome-Davies)

# FRINGE BENEFITS

# Middlesex man

*Colin Ward*

All that stuff about Essex Man, like Carshalton Man 15 years ago, is part of the patrician fantasy that pervades English life. In the dream world of snobbery, anybody who is anybody lives either in the Georgian streets of the city centre or the remote countryside, like the eighteenth-century aristocracy with a rural estate and a town house, paid for by slaves in the West Indies.

The truth, known to us all, is that a majority of the British people, like a majority of Europeans and North Americans, live in suburbs. It is the characteristic settlement pattern of this century. Yet suburbs have been the target of such a barrage of criticism—social, fiscal, aesthetic, political, but overwhelmingly snobbish—that the very word *suburban* became a term of abuse in the folklore of the intelligentsia on both the right and the left.

It was not until the postwar years that a school of sociologists, architects and historians emerged (like H J Dyos, J M Richards, or Nicholas Taylor whose *The Village in the City* is absurdly out of print) who became connoisseurs of the suburban environment and its advantages as a habitat for most of our fellow creatures. I put it this way since the suburb is also the safest place for many other species, such as foxes and badgers, since farmers were subsidised to make "the countryside" uninhabitable by them.

I've a working knowledge of big swathes of London's suburban hinterland and complete ignorance of the rest. So I had that nice exploratory feeling when visiting a son in a patch of the lost county of Middlesex, mentally ticking off all those aspects that made it a good suburb. In fact, it was that most desirable of places, a suburb of a suburb. So there was no High Street: no branches of the usual multiples you see in every main street in the land, not even any building society or estate agents' offices.

But there was the station, key link to everywhere else, even though it had been carefully minimalised so that it could be unmanned from 7pm onwards. Around it was the usual handful of small shops. Then I saw how, in the road from the station, the houses, from the 1890s to 1920s period, had been altered beyond recognition by generations of home improvers. The latest was one of those nightmares for planning officers that we all love to see. Not only had the owner covered the walls with vertical crazy-paving, but he had then concealed them by adding on a full-width porch or veranda supported by Etruscan columns: a mini-version of the South Fork ranch in *Dallas*.

The room in the next street for which our youngest pays £45 a week is only 10ft by 7ft, so he took me for a tour. Round the corner was a primary school, a park with football pitches, formal gardens with seats and a playground, as well as an avenue of trees remaining from the past, allotments and a whole series of back alleys for garages and small businesses. There was a branch library and the once usual workaday shops: plumber, electrician, car and cycle spares.

Our destination was the Chinese Chippie. The elderly owners had sized up local demands and adapted to them. So they sold fish and chips and the usual variants, eat here or take-away, as well as the basic range of Cantonese dishes. We settled for cheese omelettes, chips and beans. Wipe away your gourmet smile, for this was the first place I've been to for a decade where a cup of tea costs 18p. We stayed for about an hour and a half at our Formica table.

When we came in, the clientèle was an elderly mother and harassed daughter, meeting to explore some problem, while, several tables away, grandpa was entertaining a one year old in a pushchair. Then in came a very old man without his teeth, but with an orthopaedic sprung walking stick, which he used to amuse the baby. Then a customer came in with a black Labrador dog. This attracted the old man who stroked the dog, rewarded by a lick.

After that came the schoolchildren, sprawling around with their fizzy drinks, and then a different generation of kids, skateboards under their arms, and the local builders knocking off work. If we'd been there in the morning we would have seen the bacon-and-eggs breakfast mob or the lunchtime rush.

The point is that in most places I know, whether country towns or old suburbs, there is just *nowhere* providing a warm space, with a cup of tea to sit over for hours, for a cross-generational selection of low-spending customers. Not only that. I remember Nicholas Taylor noting how, "It is one of the most important features of the social life of our suburbs that back alleyways and back gardens should give sanctuary to the specialised craftsman, who has very often operated there for generations." Many are now doomed, not just by the uniform business rate, but by the landlord's assumption that it's OK to squeeze the last pound of rent.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Curtains for culture?

*As the Royal Shakespeare Company goes dark, Deborah Orr asks Adrian Noble what it's all for anyway*

In a matter of days, the Royal Shakespeare Company's Barbican and Pit theatres are, as they say in the trade, going dark. Back in February, when artistic director Terry Hands first announced this radical measure to contain the company's £2.9 million deficit, he may have hoped that his bluff would never be called, that by 3 November what his successor-elect Adrian Noble describes as "the sanity of our case" would have been recognised. Even the 1984 government-commissioned Special Finance Scrutiny reported that the company was well managed but "palpably underfunded". If the Priestley report's recommendation that Arts Council subsidy should be linked to inflation had been acted on, there would be no deficit today.

But the public outcry that Hands might have expected to follow his theatrical gesture never came, at least not in sufficiently copious imperial measures. Much more in the way of gut reaction came from abroad. As the *Guardian*'s critic Peter Lennon so neatly predicted: "Foreigners [will] have visions of Shakespeare, homeless in his own capital, trudging towards cardboard city."

"It's a great source of succour and inspiration for us," says Noble, of the foreign response to the latest spectacular wobble on the RSC's tightrope walk across the Thatcher years. "The support was wonderful... It's a measure of the company's cultural importance internationally. For all sorts of people across the globe, seminal experiences in their lives have been performances by the Royal Shakespeare Company."

Noble, who takes over as artistic director when the Barbican reopens in March, must find succour and inspiration where he can. For not everyone would express the RSC's place in the international arena in quite such romantic terms. Philip Hedley, artistic director of the



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Theatre Royal, Stratford East, is bluntly unsentimental: "I feel sorry for the actors in the RSC, playing night after night to a bunch of bored, half-asleep tourists doing the London rounds." Certainly, the RSC's reliance on tourists for its audience became obvious during the summer following the bombing of Libya in 1986, when Americans stayed home and even the best of the company's productions played to audiences of less than 40 per cent.

How does Noble feel about the idea that the RSC represents not so much "cultural importance internationally" as one more stop on a London sight-seeing tour? "If it was all like that, it would be terrible," he says, his boyish, greyish face taking on an even queasier look than usual. "If we're doing exciting theatre and tourists want to come and see it, that's fine... Of course, we do have a cultural responsibility. And I think that's very important. That is the importance of the ensemble, of the group of actors and of the knowledge and the values that are held within that. That's my inheritance."

But what Noble, son of a Chichester undertaker and the RSC associate director for ten years, lover of the classics and director of such major RSC successes as the *Plantagenets* and *The Master Builder*, essentially has inherited, one might suggest, is a high-class tourist attraction in crisis. Not necessarily because that's truly what the RSC is all about, but because the RSC constantly presents itself as such.

Subsidised theatre, especially that set in the classical mould, seems to have become so involved in politics that it has ceased to be involved with theatre. Its arguments embrace a petty *realpolitik*: it needs government money because it is a very important national asset. Could it possibly be that part of the theatre's trouble is that not enough people are interested in hearing these arguments, that such rhetoric exacerbates the problems it is designed to solve; that it turns people off a theatre that unwittingly presents itself as something worthy but dull, that needs propping up?

Noble, as high-profile head of Britain's only classical troupe, is in a perfect position to tackle such problems, if he so wishes. Certainly, he does not deny that such a problem might exist. "I think that two things have happened," he says, nervously doing unspeakable things to a paper napkin—Noble as yet lacks the authority of his predecessors Terry Hands, Trevor Nunn and Peter Hall. "One is that theatre as a whole has become unconfident in the 1980s, in the way it has responded to its own crisis, and, indeed, to the world as the world has changed. And that lack of confidence has manifested itself in other ways: for instance, by lack of certainty about vocabulary, the words and phrases we use to justify our existence.

"And I think that to too great a degree we've actually embraced the kind of vocabulary which is valid but is not the be-all and end-all. Our justification is not that collectively we—through VAT, PAYE, income tax—actually give back more to the Treasury than we take out. It shouldn't be that when people put ticks on a Why Do You Come To England list, that the RSC comes reasonably near the top. The central argument is: how do you value a charitable artistic institution, and what is invested in it, what sort of a society do you want?"

And that's the nub. Does subsidised theatre want a society that has theatre, or one that actually goes to the theatre? Does it care? Has theatre ever really addressed itself to the new cultural landscape that television has mapped? Cinema has tackled the shift created by TV; newspapers are in the process of doing so. The printed word is learning to sell itself more aggressively.

Couldn't theatre benefit from subjecting itself to the same kind of scrutiny? Not in terms of simply sliding towards populism, but by virtue of defining its cultural uniqueness? Can't subsidised theatre tackle its more basic problem: that it's becoming élitist, inaccessible, divorced from everyday life, a rich person's preoccupation—not so that it can "pay its way", but simply because theatre should be about engaging, not alienating, its potential audience?

These are issues that Noble is not afraid of addressing; and he does believe that the audience for his kind of theatre can be expanded. "We do have to define what makes theatre different to televison, to other arts," he says. "I'm quite clear about what that means in terms of Stratford. It's the great inheritance of Shakespeare, that is, a theatre of poetry. That's what we really need to be celebrating, investigating and putting up as our primary *raison d'être*. Poetry, verse, language. Which can inspire, which can affect us in ways that other media can't. The two great ways of expanding one's audience are, first, the excitement of the work, and, second, the price."

Exciting work didn't do a great deal for the Old Vic's box office, as Jonathan Miller will testify. And as for price, we're back to the subsidy chorus. Isn't there a more basic problem? And couldn't there be a radical solution?

"If there is a problem, it's that of a dislocation of a culture from its language," says Noble. "When language is divorced from feeling, emotion, you get into trouble with Shakespeare, you get into trouble with theatre. A classical ensemble is trained in the use of language, is trained not just in how to speak it, but how you connect the living word with the human emotion and with the spirit. That's the actor's business. That's the kind of debate that we in the theatre are willing to address."

The pundits all reckon that Noble is the right man for the RSC job, that he represents an artistic vigour and a continuity that the company needs. Could it be that, when he takes over in March, he can help orchestrate a much-needed sea-change not just in his own company, but in perceptions of subsidised theatre as a whole? Or to quote not from Shakespeare, but from George Bernard Shaw, will he continue in the modern tradition of subsidised theatre, that "an Englishman thinks he is moral when he is only uncomfortable?"

*Art*

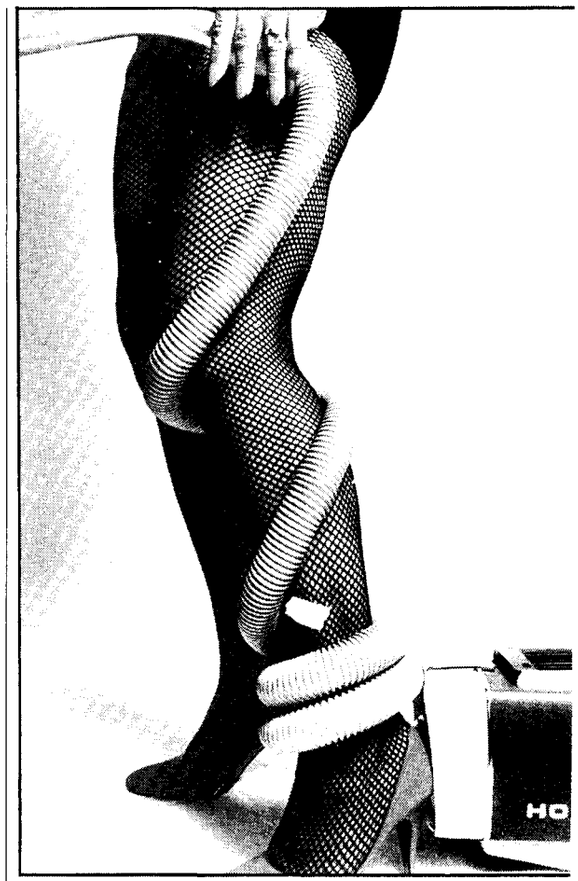
# Totem and taboo

*Sue Hubbard pictures Motherhood*

The word *Mother* is not a neutral one. It stimulates a response within us all, for all of us have had mothers, known or unknown, and many of us are mothers. Two current Birmingham exhibitions aim to question and subvert the accepted cultural notions and idealisations surrounding the word.

Throughout art history, our received images of motherhood have been determined by the fantasies, the projections and the fears of (largely) male artists. The serene self-sacrificing Virgin—the archetype of all mother love, the nurturer, the carer, the interceder—is deeply embedded in our collective unconscious. This is so despite the fact that, until the eighteenth century, marriage and its subsequent progeny were seen largely as part of a socio-economic contract.

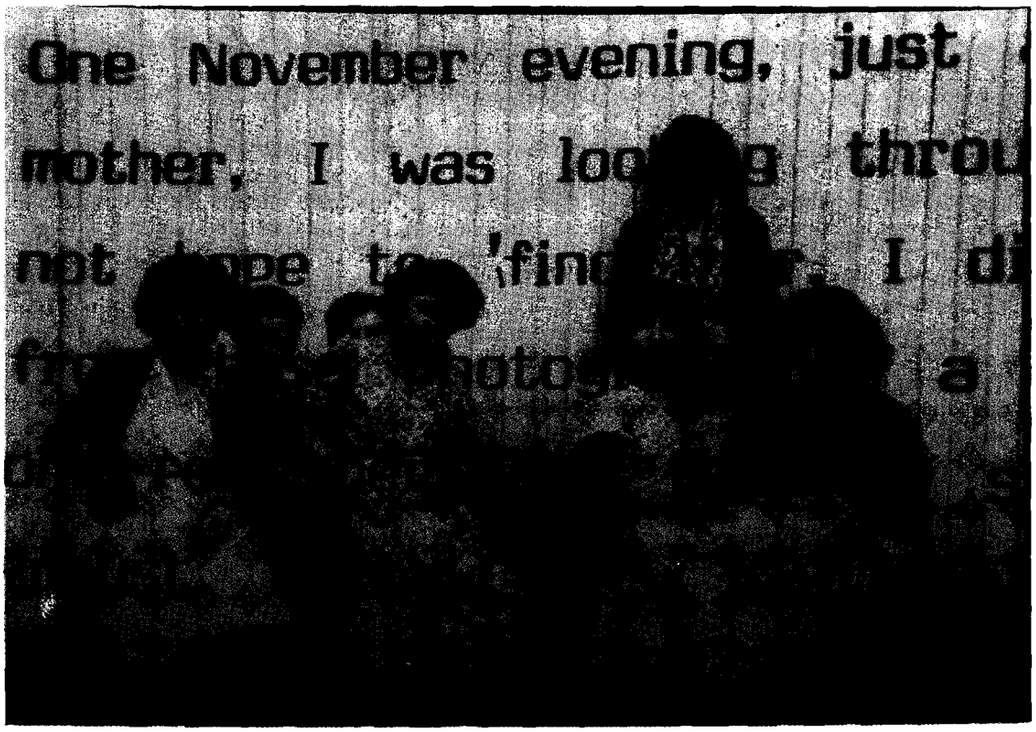
For centuries, this image of the mother has dominated the (male) artist. He has placed her on a pedestal to displace his anxieties about women's sexuality and his own Oedipal fantasies about the sanctity of the maternal body. When he has not been able to make her into a



**One of the image's from Jo Spence's *Libido Uprising* series, exploring taboos of motherhood**



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED




**Men try to reach new definitions: *Mother Desire* by Michael Maziere, photo panel 1990**

Madonna, he has made her into a whore: the temptress, the sphinx, the goddess.

Throughout history, through the manipulation of social systems and the need to contain patriarchal power, men's neurotic fear has led to the exclusion of women from the institutions of academic art, while retaining the notion of phallocentric genius. Women's creativity has been marginalised into the domestic: at best a little needlework, or flower painting; but most importantly, into child rearing. Sanctifying this complex role of domestic dependence, woman has been defined as intuitive, feminine, chthonic or of the underworld, closer to nature, closer to that which is *other*, that which is sacred. Men have bound her tight in this sacrosanct role, in this paradox of duty and mother love, bound her by a **Sacred Bond**.

In the exhibition under this title at the Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, works from the permanent collection have been reorganised in response to the show at the nearby Ikon Gallery entitled **Mothers**. The aim has been to "provide an historical survey of the mother and child...from medieval Madonna and child to Henry Moore and...to chart the evolution of significant themes and conventions". By juxtaposing images from "old masters" grouped thematically—Rodin's *Eve*, Ford Madox Brown's *The Last of England 1855*, William Bouguereau's image of *Chastity*—the effect is to provide fodder for any feminist art historical reading. Woman here is the embodiment of unstinting and unquestioning mother love.

The organisation of a new exhibition entitled *Mothers* might, therefore, appear further to ghettoise women as exclusive nurturers. The only possible justification for such a show could be to exhibit work that grapples with the pain, the ambiguities, as well as the pleasures of motherhood: to subvert received notions and explore the guilt, the contradictions, the frustration as well as the rewards.

Through installation, video, photography and painting, women (and a couple of men) reach towards new self-definitions and understanding of the stereotype. There is rawness, there is anger, there is imprisonment and there is renewal and release. Some of these dichotomies are explored in Clare Charnley's mixed-media installation *Dropping Eggs*. A pair of female hands clutches a dozen eggs. Beneath are two photographs of babies. This is a work about process, about choices, the need to nurture both her actual physical children and her psychic self. If she continues to hold on to the eggs, she can do nothing else. If she lets go, they will shatter.

Perhaps the most daring work here is *Libido Uprising* by Jo Spence. Through a series of 14 photographs (part of a much larger body of work enmeshing psychoanalysis, psychotherapy and photography), the artist explores taboos around her mother and her own sexuality, her anger and her final release. The images are potent, violent, sexual—a middle-aged woman, a Medea or Greek fury, sits in sexy black leotard, smeared with her own menstrual blood. Other photos show the domestic mother clutching a vacuum cleaner. This is a cathartic work. It provides no answers, but strives towards self-knowledge, towards forgiveness, towards letting go.

Through work such as this, maybe, we will be able to seek new definitions of what it means to be a son, to be a daughter, to be a mother, free from guilt, free from bondage.

Sacred Bond: Images of Motherhood, *Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery;* Mothers, *Ikon Gallery, Birmingham*

*Photography*

# Behind city walls

*Urbanism is being reinvented argues Elizabeth Wilson*

I have just finished writing a book about urban life. In part, this book is a polemic in praise of cities, a voice in the wilderness, as I thought—I dramatised myself as a lone opponent of the advocates of high-tech, ecologically sensitive villages, retro-chic Cotswoldy havens and rusticated Tesco stores, born-again suburbs and death-to-modernism architecture.

Having sent it off to the publisher, I realise that all this special pleading may be at least in part redundant: for, of late, urbophiles have been coming out in their thousands, and the nineties seem set for the reinvention of urbanism and the urbane.

Urban romanticism lives on. Why do cities seem so full of dreams and possibilities, of "desires and fears", as Italo Calvino wrote in his book *Invisible Cities*? This quotation begins the catalogue of **The Invisible City** (Photographers' Gallery, 8 Great Newport Street, London WC2 until 1 December), an exhibition which addresses urban romanticism. If one way

*Perhaps this is an appropriate corrective to the hysteric gloss and glitter of the "new" London*

of discussing cities is with a planner's rationalism, the opposite approach is the immersion of the romantic—who seeks not to impose her will in the form of a zoned plan stamped upon the fabric of the city, but to lose her/himself in the labyrinth. The modes are of domination or surrender. Neither seems entirely adequate to the situation of the city today.

Planners see problems and produce solutions. But, in the past at least, planning has often been so highly ideological, so fixated on the regulation of the urban poor and the extirpation of human waywardness and vice, that bleak housing estates and frozen business districts have been the result.

Leon Krier's belief in facilitating the spontaneity of urban growth, in the cherishing of city "villages"—localities—and in the sense that a city should be an ever-changing human habitation created by those who use and love it, is, in this context, attractive. In practice, however, his vision blithely ignores the imperatives of capital speculation and profitable development. Postmodern architecture, though, hasn't exactly been a success; more often than not it has merely imposed a more vulgar monumentality or a different suburban uniformity. The welfarism and socio-moral engineering of town planning have blighted many of our cities, without reducing the problems that planning claimed it would solve.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Yet romanticism can also be negative, and *The Invisible City* exemplifies this. It is the second of a projected series of exhibitions, the first having concentrated on the "new London" of Docklands, shopping malls and fake history.

By contrast *The Invisible City* looks at a hidden face of the inner city—at homelessness, at displacement, at the disintegration behind the mirror glass and the palm-filled atrium. Both the images themselves and David Chandler's catalogue introduction express an overwhelmingly negative view of urban life, emphasising decay, disintegration and loss of meaning.

The photographs focus on demolition: the series by Crispin Hughes and Chris Boot show a man in a derelict church, or a series of churches; Alison Marchant assembles images of a lost backyard, a room already falling to bits and waiting for the demolition squad; Lea Andrews presents scenes from the life of a ratcatcher. The photographs eschew documentary realism in favour of the suggestive, the semi-narrative, the dreamlike; the overall impression is of pessimism and gloom.

Perhaps that is an appropriate corrective to the hysteric gloss and glitter of the "new" London, but, notwithstanding the claims of the catalogue, there is little sense of an exploration of the abiding fascination of even the fearful, most labyrinthine aspects of the urban maze.

In this exhibition, anti-urbanism is revealed as the inner meaning of our fascination with urban life. A city is a place of horror. This, in fact, projects the romantic fallacy: a displacement on to the city of problems caused by something else. This exhibition is in the direct line of a long-established tendency to use the city as a *metaphor* for all social problems —which is all very well as long as the metaphor is not taken literally. The interstices of the city have been, at least since Victorian times, and arguably for longer, a metaphor for poverty, exploitation and the results of rapacious capitalism. This, however, has unfortunately turned into a belief that it is the city itself that creates poverty, disease, homelessness, misery and greed. The truth is that capitalist development is *destroying* cities (although one could argue that it also to some extent created them).

David Mellor's section of the catalogue pursues the theme of the dark city, and implicitly endorses conservative ideologies. Mellor's essay ends with a resumé of Doris Lessing's dreadful novel *The Good Terrorist.* This novel pulsated with a seething hatred of the urban alternative living of the 1970s. The life of the squat and alternative politics was not just satirised for its silliness (it could be very silly), but was portrayed as mad and destructive.

What Mellor's catalogue of hate and entropy misses is that writers such as Dickens, Graham Greene, Conrad and even Martin Amis, and artists such as Gilbert and George, reveal in their work a love for the perverse beauty of the dangerous and alienating, yet strangely seductive, city. If all was as bleak as Mellor suggests, these works would not even exist, and if his brilliant but one-sided anathema represents the view of the critical establishment on urban life, then perhaps my (or at any rate a) polemic in praise of city life is needed after all.

*Photography*

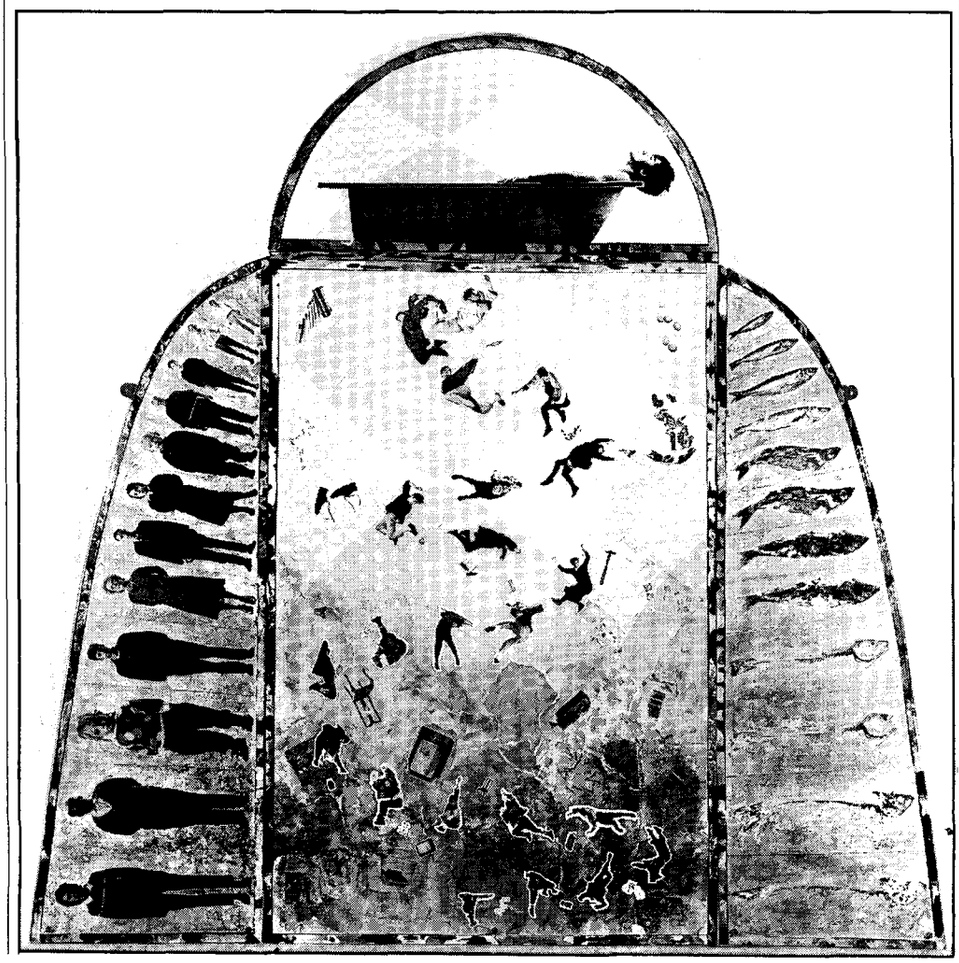
# Making shapes in space

*Janet Abrams sees choreography expressed in dance photos*

Contemporary dance often seems to be one of this country's few areas of genuinely postmodern creative endeavour, wriggling out of the straitjacket of the literary and exploring emotions through the dumb show of physical gesture. Groups like the Featherstonehaughs, the Cholmondeleys, DV8, and Adventures in Motion Pictures have—apart from glorying in deliberately cumbersome titles—acquired a strong off-stage identity through the images of Chris Nash. A young photographer working mostly in monochrome, his experiments with the plane of the print parallel those of the dancers with the performance space.

Classical dance photography has its conventions: outstretched limbs caught in archetypal perfection, with gauzy light and diaphanous costumes fluttering; the spot-lit tryst, she pitifully sweet, he robustly muscular. Sex roles are stylised and forever romantic. While women are always graceful, men are—as the *Independent*'s Louise Levene puts it—scarcely more than "wheelbarrows in tights". Just as these troupes perform in the spartan ambience of The Place, rather than the red plush velvet of the Royal Opera House, so their visual representation eschews the Mills & Boon syrup of traditional ballet photography. Chris Nash's use of black and white serves, paradoxically, to underline the fact that, in contemporary dance, issues of gender are far from black and white; and that size and shape aren't standardised either.

Even within all-male or all-female troupes (the F's and the C's, for instance), the individual dancers have strongly differentiated personalities and physiques. One of the Featherstonehaughs has particularly protruberant ears, which are still discernible even in a much-reduced full-body shot, where he appears isolated in white space in the upper part of the picture. The position might be the "background" or a higher altitude, or in some other spatial or psychological relationship to the five men whose faces are ranged like bowling pins along the bottom margin, each cut off at the hose. The full-length figure, in a resolutely rectilinear suit, acts like an exclamation mark hovering above these enlarged heads or, better still, a question mark between the inverted commas of his earlobes: the question being: "Where is the individual in relation to the group?"



Chris Nash and Lea Anderson, "Untitled", 1987



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The same play of scale and implied perspective is evident in a neighbouring shot of the same group, where dancers are shown in diminishing size from right to left, suggesting a three-dimensional recession, which eerily contradicts the flatness of the background—once again, that Dulux-style "pure brilliant white". In a third, the dancers are almost silhouetted in dog-like crouches, giving the impression of a ground level parallel to the picture frame, but otherwise unmarked by any shadow or other horizontal indicators. Nash thus finds photographic equivalents for the temporary lines and virtual volumes that dancers inscribe in space by their mutual disposition on stage.

Elsewhere, montage techniques put faces and legs together like Humpty Dumpties or allow them to float, disembodied, above foreshortened views of female heads and feet. Nash's interest in repetition and symmetry, both reflective and rotational, echoes those aspects of dance syntax, but the static quality of the photographic print necessarily reduces these ideas to mere motifs. Liz Lauren's legs form an ink-blot triangle, while a face multiplied in a circle (as in the image from Jonathan Lunn's *The Somnambulist*) ceases to imply turning motion and becomes just flat shapes on a surface—a rosette or a still from inside a kaleidoscope.

Two framed works take the photograph into the terrain of religious iconography. Nash collaborated with choreographer Lea Anderson on the triptych in memory of Rossana Sen, a member of the Cholmondeleys who committed suicide last year. A shot of her head, lying back in a white bath (a heavenly coffin?) crowns a tableau in which curved side-panels show friends and fish on left and right and, in the centre, a loose montage of cut-out soaring figures gives a joyous salute to the late dancer, on a celestial ground strewn with images of daily comestibles. In the triptych of a dance from *Flesh and Blood*, her gestures and costume—a second skin of rubberised cloth—convey some of the ambivalent warrior-sainthood of a Joan of Arc.

Nash certainly knows how to capture dynamic motion: the DV8 photos contain enormous energy, with bodies leaping up, around, and landing with a controlled thud that leaves the hair still flying. But in his more recent white-ground images, he seem to be developing a vocabulary in which the array of body parts on a *tabula rasa* is a visual counterpart of current choreographic preoccupations. Instead of striving to capture the dancer in flight, Nash concentrates on the mutual and cumulative patterns of bodies considered as emblems rather than meteorites. Rather than still frames snatched from a continuous sequence, Nash knowingly converts the kinetic into the graphic. Technical virtuosity interests him less than the construction of abstract tableaux. Hence the success with which his images lend themselves to reproduction, on posters and as arresting illustrations to press listings: they are, quite literally, company logos.

Beyond Dance: An Exhibition of Photographs by Chris Nash *at the Portfolio Gallery, 345 Portobello Road, London W10, until 3 November.*

*Travel*

# Courting comfort

*Douglas Kennedy succumbs to the charm of Singapore*

The taxi driver was called Mr Tan and he told me with pride that he was an employee of the Comfort Taxi Company. Comfort Taxis, he explained, was a "customer-oriented business" that operated according to a three-point productivity plan. Would I be interested in seeing this plan, he asked. I said, "Why not", and he handed me a printed card which read:

Comfort Productivity Plan: 1. Social responsibility: Be loyal to Singapore. Provide camaraderie in *comfort*. Uphold good image in *comfort*. 2. Service attitude: Provide a pleasant journey. Take pride in service. Be honest, polite, patient and understanding. 3. Skill: Improve skill and knowledge. Obey traffic regulations. Maintain vehicles well.

Mr Tan asked me if I felt that he was adhering to the Comfort Productivity Plan during the course of this ten-minute journey to the central business district of the city. I assured Mr Tan that he was a credit to Comfort Taxis, and, of course, to Singapore. Mr Tan beamed. He was pleased that I was pleased with his driving skill, with Comfort Taxis, and with Singapore. Visitors must be happy in Singapore, he told me. Visitors must feel comfortable here. They must feel that they are in a clean, safe place. This is why there were so many rules here. Rules were good for Singapore because rules had made Singapore what it is today. And Singaporeans owed a great deal to their prime minister of the past 25 years—Lee Kuan Yew—for the great changes he had made in their lives.

*Tickets for the superb underground system are valid for 30 minutes, thereby ensuring that nobody loiters*

"He has made us efficient," Mr Tan said. "He has made us profitable. He has made us energetic. He has made our living standards the highest in South-east Asia. He has also torn down everything in the city that I remember from my childhood. He has made Singapore unrecognisable. But he *has* made us profitable..."

In many ways, Mr Tan's comment was the perfect distillation of the dilemma that is contemporary Singapore. For to visit this appendix on the tip of the Malaysian peninsula—a city-state of three million souls huddled within the confines of an island roughly the size of Manchester—is to bear witness to an audacious social experiment. Here, all remnants of so-called third-worldliness have been excised from a landscape which, until the 1960s, was one of the most intriguingly tawdry in Asia. But now, there are no slums, no beggars, no heavy-duty tropical diseases such as cholera, malaria and yellow fever, no dangerous drinking water, no dead animals festering in the street—in short, none of the tell-tale signs of underdevelopment and sunstruck post-colonial chaos.

Instead, contemporary Singapore is an unapologetically neutral environment, and one which has been designed by planners who consider the shoping mall to be the true aesthetic achievement of the late twentieth century. Then again, this island-state is, quite simply, one big modern shopping mall, interspersed with modern office blocks and modern apartment blocks. And, as many residents are quick to point out, life in Singapore is essentially a sequence of air-conditioned environments. Or, to put it another way, you move from a climate-controlled dwelling to a climate-controlled office, to a climate-controlled shopping mall, and then back again to the climate-controlled dwelling at the end of your day.

At first sight, there is something disturbingly Orwellian about the regimentation of life in Singapore. Maybe it's the omnipresent Environment Police who patrol the steets and the underground, nabbing offenders who dare to, say, open a packet of chewing gum on the underground (the fine for which is the equivalent of £165), and actually haul people off to court for spitting on the street (another £165 fine). Maybe it's the heat-sensor devices they have installed in public toilets which (supposedly) set off an alarm if someone fails to pull the chain (fine: £50). Maybe it's the discovery that all tickets for the superb underground system are valid only for 30 minutes, thereby ensuring that nobody loiters on public transport for longer than they need to. Or maybe it's the fact that the only newspaper in Singapore—the *Straits Times*—reads a bit like an evangelical school newspaper, as it always exhorts its readers to be good citizens. Whatever it is, a spell in Singapore leaves you with the impression that you're actually in a very strict school where no one would dare run in the hallways.

Of course, those residents of Singapore who don't agree with the rules of this "game" can find themselves on the wrong side of the law. For this is, without question, a one-party state (People's Action Party), where dissenting voices are generally silenced and a quiet undercurrent of paranoia hangs over all conversations about the Lee Kuan Yew regime. Yet, what's most fascinating about the deal that has been struck between the Party and the populace is the way in which the lure of genuine prosperity has been used as the principal bargaining chip. And there's a peculiar genius to a government that has realised that a people who have been given the wherewithal to be active consumers will not hassle the regime too much when it comes to civil liberties.

Still, despite all the comforts of life provided by the government, an air of dissatisfaction hangs over Singapore. "Do you know how we validate our lives here," a journalist asked me. "We shop. That's how we measure our worth... that's how we see how far we have come."

I exist, therefore I shop—the credo of the brave new Asian world that is called Singapore.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# sh News Flash Nev

**1991 ANC POCKET DIARY,** available from end of October, from ANCSA MERCHANDISE, PO BOX 881, London N7 8QW, at £3.50 by mail order. Telephone 071-607 6768. Wholesale prices on application.

**The diary features:**
● The ANC Emblem on its cover ● Signed photographs of Dr Tambo and Nelson Mandela ● A short history of the ANC ● Situation in South Africa at the end of 1990 ● Immediate issues confronting the ANC ● Demand for a constituent assembly ● Meaning and origin of ANC symbols ● Background information and statistics of population, incomes, land occupation and system of government in South Africa ● The Freedom Charter in full ● **Significant events in the struggle for liberation entered on over 100 days** ● Addresses of ANC offices in South Africa, Britain and other countries ● Public holidays in Britain, Ireland, and 8 other countries ● Page to a week diary with months and days in English, Zulu, SeSotho, Afrikaans, French, German.

**ANCSA MERCHANDISE specialises in the supply of goods bearing the designs, colours and logos of the ANC**, including many different designs of ● T-shirts ● Sweat shirts ● Track suits ● scarves ● caps ● bobble hats ● gloves ● enamel badges ● earrings ● necklaces ● silver jewellery ● Coffee Mugs ● Glasses ● Beautiful batik cards ● framed batik ● Greeting cards ● Postcards ●

*A catalogue is available free of charge from the above address, but please send a stamped addressed C5 size envelope.*

**Banner Theatre Presents**

## A Retrospective Festival of the life and work of Ewan MacColl

**Concerts**
**Banner Theatre, Ian Campbell, The Elliots of Birtley, Kitchen Girls, Peggy Seeger, Sisters Unlimited, The Stewarts of Blairgowrie, Dave Swarbrick, Maria Tolly, Workers' Theatre Movement**

**Workshops**
**Frankie Armstrong, Peter Everett, Willie McPhee, Jean Newlove, Frances Rifkin, Leon Rosselson, Anna Seymour**

**Open Forum**
**Norman Buchan, MP. Dave Douglas, Hamish Henderson, Raphael Samuel, Political Song Network**

**Films**
***The Big Hewer, Before the Mast,* Stories and Songs of a Scots Family Group, Strikebound, Festival of Fools, Rhythms of the World; Ewan MacColl Profile, Harlan County, Gone for a Soldier.**

**Midlands Arts Centre, Edgbaston, Birmingham.**
**23rd to 25th November 1990**

**For full details and bookings send a stamped addressed envelope to Banner Theatre, Port '86, All Saints Street, Hockley, B18 7RL**
**021 507 0929**

SALE

# Mosquito Bikes Autumn Sale

## Monday 22 Oct – Saturday 27 Oct

**Reductions on Mountain Bikes, Hybrid Bikes, Clothing & Accessories**

**Trek 830**
RRP £299.95
SALE PRICE £269.95
ALL CROMOLY & SHIMANO 300LX GROUPSET

**Trek Composite**
RRP £1995.95
SALE PRICE £1695.95

**MARIN PINE MOUNTAIN**
RRP £569.95
SALE PRICE £509.95

**TEAM**
RRP £799.95
SALE PRICE £699.95

**Also on Sale**
● GT Kona
● Specialized Dirt Dogs: RRP 42.95, Sale 37.95
● Specialized Wild Dog: RRP 37.95, Sale 30.95
● Diadora Touring Shoes: RRP 39.95, Sale 25
● Shimano Exage Brake Set: RRP 27.95, Sale 24.95

**AND MANY OTHER GREAT SALE OFFERS!**

**Competition Draw on Saturday 27 October at 4pm – see Catalogue for deatails**
NOW IN STOCK: ● KLIEN ● MOSQUITO AND DAWES TOURING BIKES

mosquito

**Check it all in the new Mosquito Catalogue..OUT NOW**
A selective view of the best in cycling on offer at Mosquito bikes, Money off vouchers, Cycling tips and advice
*Send off for your copy today — Price £1*

***123 Essex Road, Islington, London N1 2SN 071-226 8841***
***REPAIRS:** 10 Bradbury Street, Dalston, London N16 8JN 071-249 7915*


LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# WATERSTONE'S

## LITERARY DINNER AND DEBATE

**Tuesday 6th November 1990, 7.00pm**

The Law Society Hall, 113 Chancery Lane, London WC2

Black Tie • Champagne Reception • Dinner

Two teams of writers will debate George Gissing's proposition that:

***"the only good biographies are to be found in novels"***

Proposing:

### WILLIAM BOYD

Boyd has just published an acclaimed new novel, *Brazzaville Beach*. His previous novel, *The New Confessions* purports to be the autobiography of a sort of 20th century Rousseau. The novel was praised for the detail and authenticity of its approach, and many said that it read as if it were a 'genuine biography'.

### ANTHONY BURGESS

Burgess is well known as a prolific writer of both fiction (*Earthly Powers, Kingdom of the Wicked*) and non-fiction. He has recently published the second part of his autobiography, *You've Had Your Time*, which demonstrates yet again his great mastery of the art of storytelling.

### A.S. BYATT

Antonia Byatt's latest novel *Possession* (shortlisted for this year's Booker Prize) with its fictionalised researches into the life of a Victorian poet, is intimately concerned with the mysteries and false trails of biographical research.

Opposing:

### RICHARD HOLMES

Is the author of acclaimed biographies of Shelley and most recently Coleridge, as well as *Footsteps*, a highly original book about the art of the biographer. He began writing biography after some frustrated attempts at fiction and is fascinated by the process of detectioninvolved in 'tracking down' his subject.

### MICHAEL HOLROYD

Has been a major contributor to the revival of literary biography in the last twenty years. His studies of Lytton Strachey, and most recently George Bernard Shaw, are hugely detailed, and leave no stone unturned. Holroyd has claimed that the modern literary biography is our equivalent to the great Victorian novel.

### PHILIP ZIEGLER

Philip Ziegler is both a historian and biographer. He takes as his subjects the major public figures of our time. His studies of Diana Cooper, Lord Mountbatten and most recently Edward VIII are amongst the most authoritative biographies ever written. His commitment to the necessity of biography is manifest in all his writing.

## Tickets £39.00

Please reserve _____ seats @£39.00 for the first Waterstone's Literary Dinner and Debate

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____ Post Code _____

**PAYMENT:** We accept payment by cash, cheque or credit card (PHONE BOOKINGS - 071 584 4448) Visa _____ Access _____ Amex _____

No. _____ Expiry Date _____

Cheques should be made payable to *WATERSTONE'S BOOKSELLERS LIMITED*

Please list names of people you wish to sit with: _____

_____

Please return to: Nicky Clarke, Autumn Debate, Waterstone's Booksellers, Ixworth House 37 Ixworth Place, London SW3 3QH *Tel:* (071) 584 4448 *Fax:* (071) 584 6315



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Superior persons

**THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE BRITISH ARISTOCRACY**
**David Cannadine**
Yale University Press £19.95 paperback/£35 hardback

*Peter Clarke*

In recent years, the phenomenon of the transatlantic bestselling blockbuster has burst upon historical scholarship. After Paul Kennedy, who used to adorn the University of East Anglia, had gone to Yale, his mighty tome on *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* took the American electorate by storm and was squeezed—or milked—for its current insights during a long presidential campaign. Riding the bicentennial wave of interest in the French revolution, Simon Schama of Harvard, formerly a Fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford, gave us *Citizens* as a fittingly ample chronicle of those momentous events. Now David Cannadine, whose move from Cambridge to Columbia was another prominent landmark in the brain drain, has produced 800 profusely illustrated pages on *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, which tells us everything we wished to know about the topic.

Rather more than we wished to know? No—Cannadine's forte is to be exhaustive without being exhausting. He is a talented writer who deploys literary stratagems with a staff officer's ingenuity, resource and thoroughness. We are simply not permitted to flag in our enthusiasm, or curiosity, or our appetite for the information which he has marshalled. Right from the first page he gets a buttonhold, with one glittering eye cocked on the grand portent of his story and another constantly alert for the graphic detail with which to bring it alive.

This book displays an unusual combination of gifts. One is for taxonomy. Cannadine is the most systematic of classifiers: he has a slot for everything and works through the activities of the British élite, category by category, genre by genre, with encyclopaedic zeal. Yet his other striking gift is, quite simply, for anecdote. His anatomy of the aristocracy is brought alive through flesh-and-blood examples conveyed with a verve which sometimes achieves a shock of recognition and sometimes just a shock. There is nothing anodyne about Cannadine.

Up to the last two decades of the 19th century, the landed élite was firmly in charge. Nearly three quarters of the British Isles was in the hands of fewer than 5,000 people—a pattern of concentration in land ownership greater than in any other European country. Moreover, the peerage, headed by the Duke of Westminster, was dominant within this group and still merited Edmund Burke's description as "the Corinthian capital of polished society".

Whether the criterion is wealth or power or status, these magnificent grandees were at the tip of the pyramid. Their vast estates in the country provided the economic base for a political influence exerted at a metropolitan level and for a social life focused on the London Season, which revolved around their great palaces. Looking back in the 1920s, the Marchioness of Aberdeen remarked that if in 1877 it had been

**Last of the few: Winston Churchill and Lord Halifax stroll down Whitehall in 1938**



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

suggested that Grosvenor House and Devonshire House were to be demolished, and that Spencer House would become a ladies' club, "we should surely have asked ironically whether the Tower of London would be turned into a theatre or the British Museum into a circus." Yet it happened in her lifetime—and worse was to follow for the aristocracy. By the 1980s Earl Nelson was a police constable and Lord Teviot was a bus conductor.

Decline and Fall is a well-established historiographical mode, replete with opportunities for causal analysis and indulgent melancholy. There is not much of the latter in Cannadine's dry-eyed account, so we look to it the more expectantly for its thematic insights. The author points to three salient developments, "which were of the first magnitude in importance". The first was the demise of the Anglo-Irish élite that had once been the epitome of landed power. What with the political revolution of the Home Rule struggle, culminating in an independent republic in the south and the economic and social revolution of peasant land ownership, the old Ascendancy was undermined. Harold Nicolson recorded Lord Powerscourt's lament at his great mansion in Wicklow in 1942: "Here I am marooned—the last of the Irish aristocracy, with nobody to speak to."

A second theme is the impact of the first world war. After all, what is the use of a feudal caste if it cannot fight? The aristocracy had kept the British army as one of its preserves. Lord Dundonald explained why: "I felt whenever I entered the barrack gate, no matter what people were outside, inside there were gentlemen, with the ideas of gentlemen." The result was a disproportionate loss among the upper classes in a war that exposed its officer corps to the carnage of the trenches. It may be true that four fifths of the aristocrats who served came home again; but, as with the employment statistics, it is the missing 20 per cent which is rightly seen as the more significant figure. To one high-born and high-minded Tory MP, the moral was deplorably obvious: "While everything generous, self-sacrificing and noble is shedding blood on the fields of Flanders, plutocracy is on the warpath at home."

Finally, Cannadine points to the significance of the sales of land between 1910 and 1922, "which amounted to a transfer of property on a scale rivalled in Britain this millennium only by the Norman Conquest and the Dissolution of the Monasteries". Admittedly, the change was masked by the fact that the existing tenant farmers were the chief beneficiaries. The crucial period coincides with the heyday of Lloyd George's career, and he emerges accordingly as the hero (or villain) of the book. His pre-war assaults upon the House of Lords—"500 men chosen accidentally from among the unemployed"—all introduced a new asperity.

Cannadine argues that by 1914 the landed interest knew that it was beaten. Coming on top of 30 years of agricultural decline, which had sent rents plummeting, political uncertainty meant that the game was no longer worth the candle. Even the Tory party threatened to abandon the magnates in favour of wider land ownership. As Lord Milner, that premature Thatcherite, put it, "If the present social order is to endure, it is simply necessary, at whatever cost, to effect a great increase in the number of people who have a direct personal interest in the maintenance of private property."

The advent of a wartime coalition, perpetuated after the war under the hated Lloyd George, did not help. Instead it set upper-class teeth on edge about "this damned cleverness" which had crept into public life ("and the more you get so-called businessmen and pushers into politics, the more you will have of it"). After this, the aristocrats had to settle for what they could get—a company directorship here, a colonial governorship there—while the openings which had been uniquely theirs closed down.

In the Foreign Service, always a cut above the rest of Whitehall, connection and patronage did not suddenly cease to matter. But Versailles, as Vansittart put it, saw the demise of "a whole world of quarterings, sword-play, mustachios and tight pants". Why send a nobleman to present his credentials in a people's republic? Eventually the British empire could no longer perform the historic task which John Bright had sarcastically ascribed to it: that of a gigantic system of outdoor relief for the aristocracy.

Yet, in the end, the picture is not one of stark contrasts, but one clouded by ambiguity, anomaly and hypocrisy. Cannadine reminds us that the grandest of all the pro-consuls, Lord Curzon, sometime Viceroy of India and Foreign Secretary, needed the wealth of his American wife to live like a superior person, and "was unavoidably dependent on the very plutocracy he so feared and despised". Let us agree that the aristocracy experienced a decline, to which it adapted with a mixture of resignation and regret, and that it experienced, too, a fall from political pre-eminence. If power has gone, however, is it true that wealth and status have also disappeared?

The Duke of Westminster remains the richest man in Britain; and even now a title and a seat in the House of Lords count for something—not least to impressionable Americans. It is ironical that, if David Cannadine has produced a historical bestseller, its sales will be fuelled by the sort of deferential social snobbery that his book treats with such disdain.

# Wasted years

**TACKLING THE INNER CITIES: THE 1980s REVIEWED, PROSPECTS FOR THE 1990s**
**Susanne MacGregor and Ben Pimlott (editors)**
Oxford University Press
£10.95 paperback/£35 hardback

*Colin Ward*

The theme of the contributors to this symposium is that government policy towards "inner cities" is irrelevant to the issues involved. And they stress first that words like "underclass", and "inner city", are imports from the United States; they are used to describe a dependent class and area, and get applied just as much to those sad peripheral housing estates, or indeed to the city of Bradford as a whole.

But usually "inner city" means a place which happens to have a Labour council, whose policies have to be overridden by central government. On the "law and order" issue, John Benyon and John Solomos conclude that the prospects for reform are not good, and that "further urban unrest remains in prospect", while Robert Reiner finds a cross-party congruence on the idea that "the effectiveness of criminal justice and policing depends on the involvement of the community", but that the government "denies that this requires full local democratic control, as opposed to consultation".

Susanne MacGregor notes that it was easy to launch a successful attack on the welfare state precisely because "its principles and institutions had not been adequately defended". Voters were induced to see it as a gravy-train for the feckless and marginal people down there, not as an insurance for us worthy citizens. Peter Townsend explains how the extreme forms of inner-city problems in the past 10 years have been due directly to the government's economic and social doctrines, and Hilary Land charts the measures by which a series of these doctrines have forced growing numbers of people into dependence on lower wages, lower benefits and less family support. John Gibson shows how the introduction of the poll tax and the uniform business rate have done what they were intended to do: punished the poor and prevented local councils from doing anything about it.

The same message comes from David Mallen's account of education policy and Nick Raynsford's survey of housing conditions. Franco Bianchini provides a long account of the place of the arts in five British cities. Using the term broadly rather than in a fine arts sense, it was found in 1983 that "cultural industries" employed about 250,000 people in London. Bianchini isn't blind to the fact that consumerist models of arts-led regeneration have, in American cities, been part of the "revitalisation" that consists of driving the poor out of town.

Doreen Massey concludes the volume with a very useful paper on "Local Economic Strategies". She shows how policy has deliberately sought (with bodies like Urban Development Corporations) to *eliminate* local influences, whether economic or political, and that these policies have in fact worked against the interests of local residents. She examines the activities of alternatives, like the Greater London Enterprise Board, set up by the late GLC, and has a conclusion which, in some respects, sums up the message of the whole book. She says, "Mrs Thatcher won in 1979 on the basis of an attack on an outmoded, centralist statist labourism. She has for a decade now been treating us to her alternative. The nearest thing to a competing vision from the left has come from the radical local authorities, many of them in urban areas and up against the most enormous problems. If only the national party dared see it."



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Fifty five and fading

**RABBIT AT REST**
**John Updike**
André Deutsch £14.99

*Anthony Quinn*

The past 30 years of American life have been pretty crowded by any standards, and will presumably continue to disgorge their historians, their scourges and their apologists. There will be many a baggy social chronicle to pin it all down, though few will match either the intimacy or the eloquence of John Updike's *Rabbit* sequence.

Centring on the fortunes and foibles of Harry "Rabbit" Angstrom, middle American anti-hero and everyman, each novel put the seal on a decade's end—the fifties in *Rabbit, Run* (1960), the sixties in *Rabbit Redux* (1971) and the seventies in *Rabbit Is Rich* (1981). In those rollicking, rueful comedies, Updike's talents were in overdrive, both as master of the heroic sentence and historian of the spirit. While Rabbit reeled through the years from marriage and dalliance to middle age and disillusion, Updike suggested the weight of history pressing upon the whole country, a period of transition which offered—and frequently withdrew—the possibilities of change.

With *Rabbit at Rest*, the sequence comes to a close, and we witness America on the slide: "Everything falling apart, airplanes, bridges, eight years under Reagan of nobody minding the store, making money out of nothing, running up debt, trusting in God." The country has gone soft, complacent, allowing the Japanese to muscle their way to the top of the pile.

As for Rabbit, he isn't in great shape either. Prosperity hasn't managed to shoo away restlessness, or even improve his golf. Dividing time between his Pennsylvania hometown and a Florida condo with long-suffering wife Janice, Harry—once a strapping jock—has all but gone to seed, "55 and fading", and what's more, a real fatty. He's slave to his junk palate, guzzling and gulping on pretzels and peanuts and Nutter Butter cookies; with all this sludge in his arteries, a major cardiovascular catastrophe seems inevitable—Rabbit is wrecked. But it's as much his mind as his heart that keeps us riveted, for Harry is that curious thing, the silent majority made vocal: he votes for Bush, hates to hear the authorities run down, and harbours a casual contempt for ethnics and "queers". He even misses the cold war ("it gave you a reason to get up in the morning").

Yet, even as his vitality dwindles and his girth expands, the central obsession of Harry's life remains constant: sex. It is, of course, central to the whole Updike *oeuvre*; Harry is just his chief spy in the house of lust. The erotic misdemeanours of his past life haunt the pages of *Rabbit at Rest*, which brings sex at last into a melancholy embrace with death.

Mindful of his tom-tom ticker, Harry has to keep the libido in check nowadays, and transgresses only once. Unfortunately, it happens to be with Pru, his rangy, redheaded daughter-in-law. "The worst thing you've ever done," his wife sobs—"If I had a gun, I'd shoot you." This isn't what Harry needs, what with their son Nelson bankrupting the family auto business with runaway debts from a cocaine addiction. Echoing the close of *Rabbit, Run*, Rabbit runs, making his escape across big-highway America towards solitude and the ambiguous consolation of rest.

Updike's concerns propel the novel, in common with the other three, far beyond the intricacies of domestic upheaval. Harry's common-man preoccupations—air disasters, American history or space travel—are simply an aspect of his creator's boundless appetite for the American way. *Rabbit at Rest* displays an encyclopaedic familiarity with cars, cocaine, basketball, economics, heart surgery, TV shows, music, gardening and high-cholesterol food (lots of it), the complications and comforts of a life that Harry now clings to even as he is "falling, helplessly falling, toward death".

Intimations of mortality flicker throughout the book, which is oddly the gloomiest *and* the funniest of the four. Crammed between its dark meditations on love and death are tiny gems of incidental detail, such as the way a streetlight "projects rhomboidal ghosts of the window-panes, alive with a spasmodic motion as raindrops tremblingly gather and then break downward in abrupt streaks". Locked in a short circuit of prejudice, vulgarity and selfishness, Rabbit has not been a lovable creature, but he will, I suspect, be sorely missed. This junk-fuelled joyride through end-of-the-century America left me saddened and exhilarated. Updike is so far ahead of the field right now he barely needs to glance in the rear mirror.

# China warrior

**A HIGHER KIND OF LOYALTY**
**Liu Binyan**
Methuen £14.99

*Caroline Moorehead*

Were Liu Binyan still in China, he would certainly be in prison. Hundreds of his colleagues, journalists from papers like *People's Daily* and *China Youth News*, are now in detention, either without charge, or serving long sentences for being "black hands" or "chief criminal instigators, organisers and commanders of the counter-revolutionary rebellion". Liu Binyan is in exile in America.

For an astonishingly long time, China managed to escape the opprobrium that rightly comes with severe violations of human rights. One regime after another tortured, expelled and imprisoned dissidents with apparent impunity, either because no one knew what was going on or because it was politic to ignore it. It took the events in Tiananmen Square last summer finally to spark off world indignation. Even so, the full story is not widely understood in the west, and nor is Liu Binyan's name familiar to readers, though he is widely known in China itself. His memoirs, *A Higher Kind of Loyalty*, are an attempt to chronicle just what happened to several lost generations of intellectuals—and military people—silenced by the Party.

Liu Binyan was born in 1925 and spent much of his childhood under Japanese occupation. He dreamt of being an actor. At 14, a prize-winning story set him on the path to journalism, and he was soon climbing the ladder of both the Communist Party and the newspaper world. Yet he was never an obedient Party member, and, as he reported on its corruption and brutality, so he became increasingly sickened by what he saw.

His fall began in 1955, when he was first accused of being "counter-revolutionary". It was reported that Mao himself felt that Liu Binyan was "stirring up confusion" after he wrote him a long letter giving his views on the injustice and misery he encountered on his travels. The attacks on him began. He was declared a "rightist". People stopped talking to him, as they did to many others: the mid-fifties saw first hundreds, then thousands, then millions persecuted, often for nothing more than a few critical words spoken in private.

By early 1958 he had been definitively labelled an "extreme rightist", stripped of membership of the Party, sacked from his job and sent to do manual labour in the countryside. He was away 13 years, and saw his wife and two children only very occasionally.

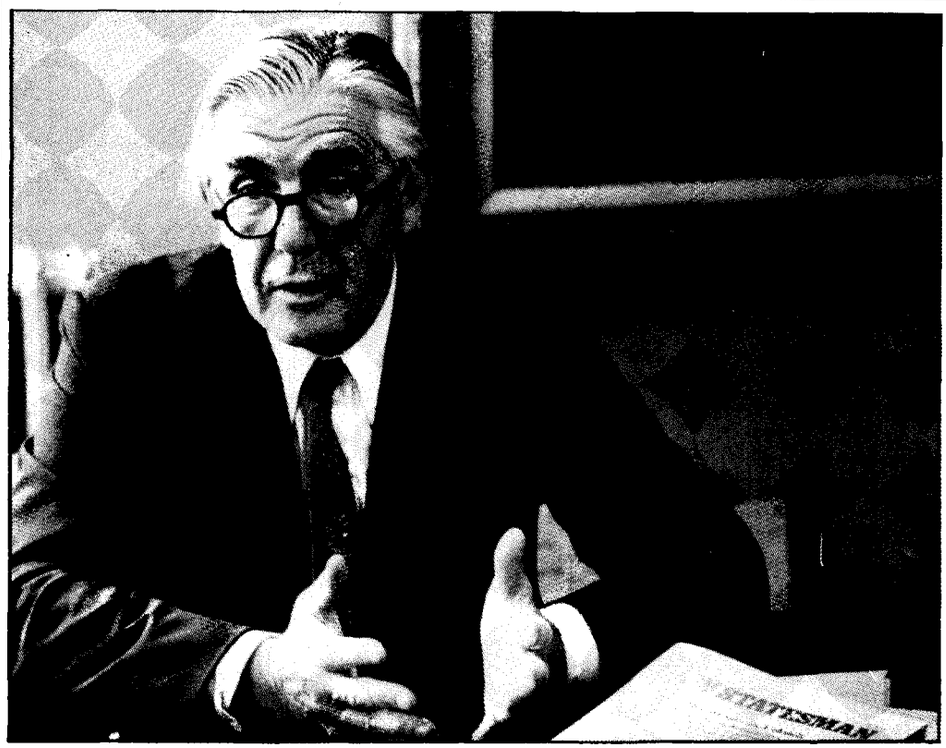
His fortunes improved. He crept slowly back to his position as reporter, only to become a target of the Red Guards and to be banished again to a cowshed in the countryside that he shared with other "monsters and demons". Before leaving Beijing, he observed a moat near his home, choked up with the bodies of those who had preferred to drown themselves.

In the mid-seventies came a brief moment of freedom in China. Liu Binyan, back at his post, turned into a focus for all those whose lives had been ruined: strangers wrote to him, came to see him, sat waiting for him outside his house. He wrote up their tragic stories. In a move to silence him, he was accused of "bourgeois liberalism", and expelled once again from the Party, shortly before the events that led to Tiananmen Square.

In exile, Liu Binyan has been lecturing widely to Chinese students who have found asylum in the United States. *A Higher Kind of Loyalty* ends on a sad note. "I am," he says, "Chinese to the marrow of my bones... Now I am able to fly kites with my grandsons, but I am an alien here in a land that does not belong to me."

Yet this testament by an admirable and courageous man is not without hope. "This is the end of the Chinese people's adolescence and their initiation into political maturity. They are no longer waiting to be liberated; they are now ready to pay the price to liberate themselves." These are words of encouragement, indeed, for the millions who must have often felt they suffered in vain.


LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



**Elder statesman: Crossman's first day in the editor's chair**

# Double Crossman

**CROSSMAN: THE PURSUIT OF POWER**
**Anthony Howard**
Jonathan Cape £16.99

*Anthony Wright*

Does anybody today remember Dick Crossman? Should they? I notice that students frequently invent a hybrid "Crossland" to denote either the man who wrote a book about socialism or the man who kept a diary about it. Since the diary is both characteristically unreliable and no longer the market leader, the identity of its author is likely to be further obscured.

We should be grateful, then, for Anthony Howard's rescue operation. The blurb invites us to see Crossman as a "meteor" streaking across the dingy skies of British politics. Given his propensity to crash into every available object at every available opportunity, meteorite seems a better term (except for the fact that they only crash once). The man was a disaster area. According to Evelyn Sharp, his formidable permanent secretary at the Ministry of Housing, it was not just that he was the proverbial bull in a china shop but that he wanted to be—"he wanted to hear the china smashing."

The disasters stretch from his private life to the cabinet. He failed to be either a consistent left-wing rebel or a climber of the greasy pole. I think "the pursuit of power" of Howard's subtitle must be a kind of joke. When he finally got the job he had always wanted (editor of the *New Statesman*, what else?), he soon turned that into one of the worst disasters of them all.

How could someone who was so awfully brilliant be so brilliantly awful? There was no doubting his big brain and brutal energy (he did not), but he was also the ballet dancer in clogs, or the footballer who dazzles with a bravura display of dribbling before crunching one of his own side while hitting the ball into the wrong goal, and then can't understand why he is not the toast of his team-mates. He genuinely seemed not to know why he upset people.

But it is not enough to put it down to a lack of "judgment", a word much used when discussing him. At school, they called him Double Crossman. His first wife said he was a swine. Dalton wrote that he was loyal to his own career and "only incidentally to anything or anyone else". Attlee once remarked that he had known the boy and would not trust the man. On the evidence of this book, the man was, quite simply, a shit. Here is a friendly biography which contains not a single example of generosity of spirit and a catalogue of perfidious shiftiness. This Tricky Dicky was certainly a rogue, but not a lovable one. His real failings were moral, not political. Bang goes another local hero.

It is a great merit of Howard's readable and well-balanced book that this kind of verdict emerges from the story but is not imposed upon it. Indeed, it shows that it is still possible to write good narrative biography of sensible length. That said, I think it nevertheless does Crossman a disservice, and that Anthony Howard was probably the wrong person to write about him. Let me explain.

Apart from his own ego, Crossman had two passions—ideas and democracy. Ideas were for tossing around and democracy was for opening up. Howard quotes some notes for a 1945 speech on the need for Labour to develop a new kind of politics to break the "protective secretiveness" of the British political system and rightly identifies this as evidence of Crossman's abiding commitment "to making democracy in Britain a reality". Life with Labour was never going to be easy for someone like this, even apart from the fact that he had the sensitivity of a JCB. "Is there any party in the history of politics," he wrote to Frank Longford in 1961, "which feels such an instinctive hostility to creative ideas and bold decisions?"

This at least suggests that Crossman's ideas deserve to be taken seriously. Howard does not take them seriously. I do not mean that he weighs them in the balance and finds them wanting, but rather that he does not give them serious notice at all. Which was precisely Crossman's lament about a whole political culture. And Howard is the exemplar of that culture, the resident and seasoned chronicler at the political court who knows who's up and who's down in cabinets, clubs and conferences and can tell a pretty tale on the basis of it. It is just that Crossman—this "awkward, independent ideas man," as he once described himself—deserved something more than this if he was to be remembered in the round.

And he should be remembered—at least by those who want more from politics than glossy greyness and don't mind if democracy means a bit of broken china along the way.

# The young Virginia

**A PASSIONATE APPRENTICE: THE EARLY JOURNALS 1897-1909**
**Virginia Woolf (edited by Mitchell A. Leaska)**
Hogarth Press £25

*Carole Angier*

Slowly, but surely, every word Virginia Woolf ever wrote is being published and annotated. Now it is the turn of her earliest diaries and essays, the first written when she was 15.

Even at 15 Virginia couldn't write badly. But inevitably the main interest of juvenilia is to catch early glimpses of what a great writer would become. In order to justify this beautiful, expensive and painstaking publication, its editor, Mitchell Leaska, claims such glimpses abound here. But I did not find it so. Some glimpses there are, and these are interesting; a few other things are interesting, too. But on the whole this is a book for scholars; and full of writing which—however well she did it—Virginia Woolf left behind.

The first, and longest, section is her diary of 1897, written 18 months after her first descent into madness. In it she wrote that this was "the first really *lived* year of my life"; and Leaska suggests that we are particularly lucky to have a record "of that momentous period". But, unfor-



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Authors

The publisher rejecting "The Spy That Came In From The Cold", said "Le Carré has no future". Fleming was told that "James Bond will never sell!" Orwell's Animal Farm was rejected as "Animal stories don't sell in the USA".

***Don't let this happen to you, contact:***

**The Adelphi Press**
**4/6 Effie Road,**
**Fulham SW6 1TD**

# LIVINGSTONE'S LABOUR

**A PROGRAMME FOR THE NINETIES**

**KEN LIVINGSTONE**

**Now available in paperback**

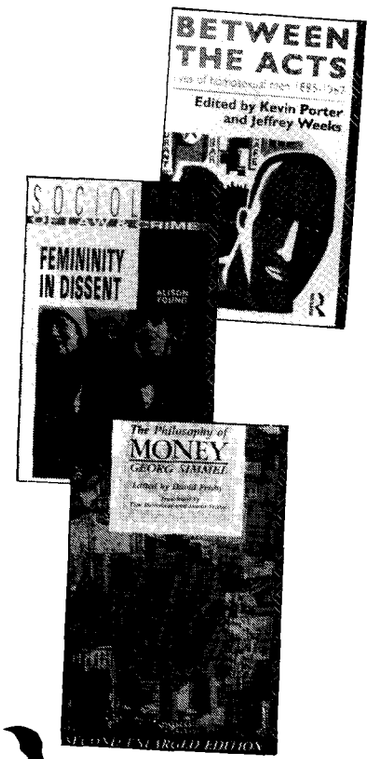
***'Livingstone's Labour* is the most immediately appealing simply because he is the voice of opposition, the Boris Yeltsin of British politics . . . it's a bit like listening to that wonderful old radio programme, Your Hundred Best Causes, with Ken as the mellifluous presenter. But it's refreshing to read some intelligent criticism of Kinnock's strategy from the Left.'**
**RICHARD GOTT, *The Guardian***

**'Livingstone is witty, charming and probably the best political in-fighter and media manipulator in Britain.'**
**RUTH DUDLEY, *The Independent***

**— £4.99 paperback —**

**Unwin Hyman**

# ESSENTIAL READING FROM ROUTLEDGE




**Between The Acts**
**Lives of Homosexual Men 1885-1967**
**Kevin Porter** and **Jeffrey Weeks**

People's lives are complex, contradictory and inconsistent. They can also be rich and passionate, at times lonely and at times exciting. *Between the Acts* reflects all of these things in the lives of fifteen gay men.

November 1990: 176pp: Pb: 0-415-00941-8: £8.99

**The Coming Fin De Siècle**
**An Application of Durkheim's Sociology to Modernity and Postmodernism**
**Stjepan Mestrovic**

Durkheim's sociology is utilised to slice through many of the complexities surrounding the debate on modernity and postmodernism. The result is an accomplished and penetrating analysis of a fascinating issue in modern social life.

December 1990: 208pp: Hb: 0-415-04858-9: £30.00

**The Constitution of Poverty**
**Toward a Genealogy of Liberal Governance**
**Mitchell Dean**

A major contribution to historical sociology which significantly challenges received ideas about the history and meaning of poverty under capitalism.

December 1990: 224pp: Hb: 0-415-04555-7: £35.00
Pb: 0-415-04556-5: £10.99

**Enterprise Culture**
Edited by **Russell Keat** and **Nicholas Abercrombie**

We hear a lot about *enterprise culture* these days, but what is it? The aim of this volume is to provide a critical understanding of the nature and implications of this culture.

*International Library of Sociology*
October 1990: 256pp: Hb: 0-415-05497-4: £35.00
Pb: 0-415-04856-7: £10.99

**Femininity in Dissent**
**Alison Young**

In *Femininity in Dissent* Alison Young takes a challenging look at the images constructed by the Press of women's political protest.

*Sociology of Law and Crime*
October 1990: 208pp: Hb: 0-415-04788-9: £30.00
Pb: 0-415-04789-7: £10.99

***New in Paperback***
**The Philosophy of Money**
*2nd Edition*
**Georg Simmel**
Edited by **David Frisby**

The complete translation of Simmel's classic work in which he provides us with a sparkling and wide-ranging discussion of the social, psychological and philosophical aspects of the money economy.

September 1990: 592pp: Pb: 0-415-04641-6: £14.99

*For further information please contact: Direct Mail Promotions, ROUTLEDGE, 11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE. Telephone: 071 583 9855*

ROUTLEDGE



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tunately, it is not a momentous record. It is a simple catalogue of reading (admittedly impressive), shopping and visiting, which could be any intelligent Edwardian 15 year old's; and the solemn annotation of every passing name and event, often filling a third of the page, seems to me scholarship gone mad.

After page 134 we are at least with the apprentice writer practising her craft. Again and again she tries to capture a landscape, a waterscape, a sunset: "The sunset makes all the air as though of melted amethyst"; "A river in summer is as though made of plates of translucent glass, the top of which slides." Often she despairs—"But words! words! You will find nothing to match the picture"—but still she goes on: "This has taken me considerably longer to write than the whole day itself: such a relation of details is extraordinarily difficult, dull & unprofitable to read. However there is no end to writing, & each time I hope that I may make better stuff of it."

This is interesting, at least in principle (in practice it's often dull, as she says). It's also interesting to see the rest of her training, as a reviewer, student (of Greek and Spanish), teacher (of history); and to see what a good critic (of Hardy and James) she already was at 21. But the two things we really want we don't get. First, that glimpse of the beginnings of her mature style. Once or twice on twilight walks she senses the possibility of preferring the indirect and evocative to the straightforward; but only near the end does she decide that "descriptive writing is dangerous", that she wants to write "not only with the eye but with the mind". These journals are almost all "descriptive writing": just what she was learning to discard.

Second, and worse, we get very little insight into *her*. She looks only outwards, and almost never tells us what she (or anyone else) thinks or feels. There are only a few hints that things are less than perfect: "one needs a rhinoceros skin—& that one has not got"; "We always seem to be outsiders where everybody else is intimate." Leaska is clearly right that putting the world into words was her way of battling for her sanity: but if he hadn't told us, we wouldn't have known.

And his introduction? He overstates his cases: the general one for the importance of these journals, and several particular ones—for example, for evidence of great tension between Virginia and her half-sister Stella. He also makes his interpretive function unnecessarily arcane, claiming that Virginia slips from "she" to "I" in her account of a drowned woman when she is only quoting her, and when her identification with the woman is movingly obvious without it.

But he is interesting on the question of the sources of Virginia's madness. He argues against the theory of sexual abuse by her Duckworth half-brothers, and puts the blame squarely on her parents, the demanding father and disappearing mother. He also comes up with a classic Freudian idea—that Virginia had sexual fantasies about her father, and displaced her own guilt on to her half-brothers. He will not be popular with feminists, I fear.

# Sex overseas

**EMPIRE AND SEXUALITY: THE BRITISH EXPERIENCE**
**Ronald Hyam**
Manchester University Press £35

*Dea Birkett*

The English, more than any other people, are obsessed with smut. They have newspapers dedicated to exposing smut and organisations determined to suppress it. Smut is deeply rooted in English sexual culture. As Jonathan Raban has pointed out, the English are the only people who "will pay a woman money to take their trousers down and spank them".

*Empire and Sexuality*, despite its academic price and pretensions, revels in this English delight in uncovering what goes on behind the bedroom door. Its aim is to detail the sexual activities and imperatives of the men who ran the British empire. Hyam has trawled published biographies of imperial figures for anecdotes. We learn that the entry "fine day" in Palmerston's diary is a secret record that he had sex in his office. Colonial Secretary Lewis Harcourt exposed his "stalagmite" to teenage boys. Gladstone flagellated himself, riddled with guilt for resorting to prostitutes.

Between copious examples of imperial misdemeanours, Hyam offers his analysis. The imperial drive and the sexual drive, he argues, were inextricably linked. The growth of the "Purity Campaign" and the subsequent closing of sexual opportunity in late 19th-century Britain led full-blooded British men to look for outlets in the empire.

Hyam outlines the incentives which made a man turn to sex overseas. The non-European prostitute, he says, was a much more attractive proposition than her British counterpart: "The best Asian prostitutes were amusingly playful hostesses. By contrast, British whores were invariably nasty, dirty and coarse, drawn from deprived backgrounds." Hyam presumes that decent British chaps sought educated, well-mannered women to be their whores.

Hyam has great sympathy for these empire-makers. "Running the Victorian empire would probably have been intolerable without resort to sexual relaxation," he says. "The historian has to remember the *misery* of empire: the heat and the dust, the incessant rain and the monotonous food, the inertia and the loneliness, the lack of amusement and intellectual stimulus. There were no cars, no radios, sometimes not even enough white neighbours to make up a proper game of tennis." It must have been this excruciating sacrifice asked of Captain Edward Sellow in India which led him, in his own words, to commence "a regular course of fucking with native women".

It is a mistake, Hyam argues, to see all Africans and Asians as being coerced into sex with their white masters. Some willingly partook in mutual relationships. But Hyam's own examples contradict this. Raikes, Assistant Native Commissioner in the former Southern Rhodesia, used to go about the local kraals, patting women's breasts, opening their legs, and "examining their private parts and generally playing disgusting tricks with them". He rewarded them with bars of soap, except for those whose breasts he considered too small. When an inquiry was set up concerning Raikes's conduct, one of the women said, "I thought he had the right to do what he liked, as he is the Native Commissioner here."

Of all the reasons Hyam gives for white male sexual adventures in exotic lands, power is not one of them. Yet nearly all his titillating tales suggest that it was the power of the coloniser over the colonised that gave these white men sexual opportunities supposedly denied them at home. Why are so many of the encounters Hyam luridly portrays between adult white men and young black teenagers?

In conclusion, Hyam identifies sex as "the only real contact [the imperial administrators] had with indigenous peoples". *Real*? Flagellating a 13-year-old Pathan boy or forcing an African teenager into oral sex might count as a *real* relationship by perverted English standards, but elsewhere in the world it counts as exploitation.

# New avengers

**REVENGE**
**Kate Saunders (editor)**
Virago £12.99
**IN SEARCH OF LOVE, MONEY AND REVENGE**
**Hilary Bailey**
Macmillan £13.99

*Kay Parris*

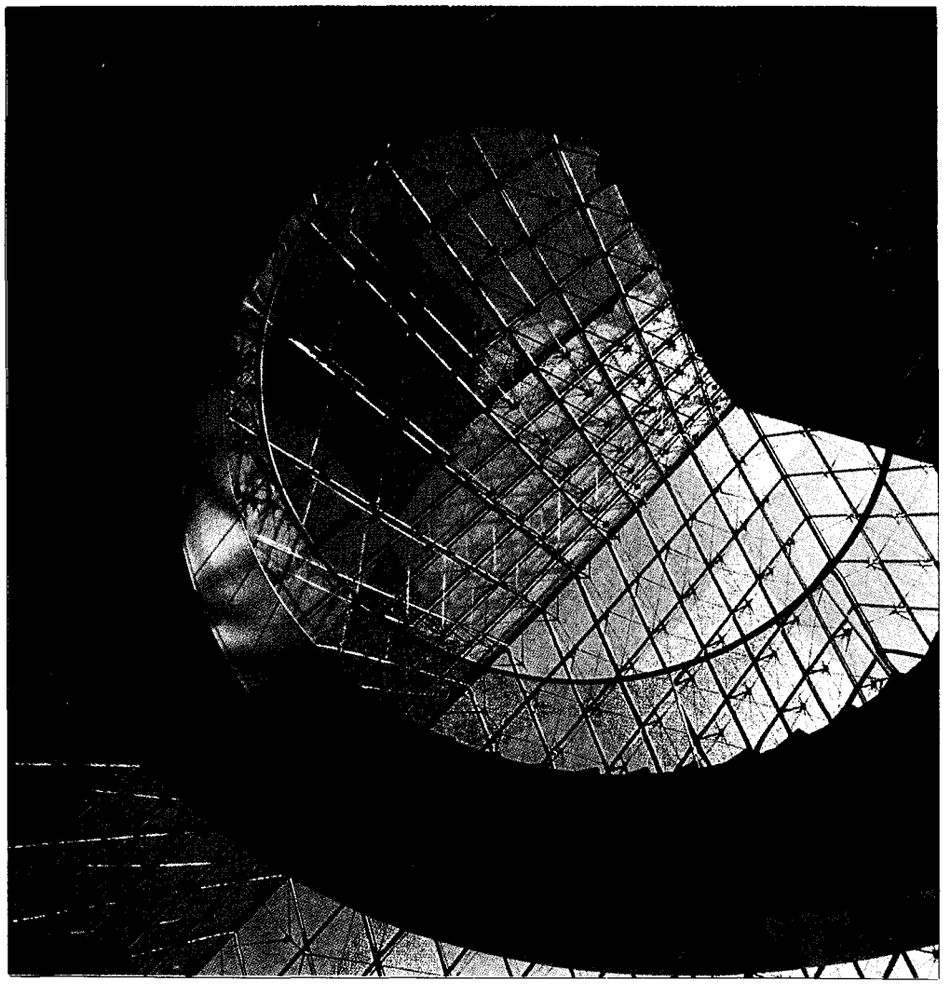
Delightful as it is to find Alice Walker and Muriel Spark sharing pages with Elizabeth Gaskell, something is surely amiss when a representative sample of female writing talent from the past 150 years is herded together under the banner of *Revenge*. What Kate Saunders, in her introduction, calls the "intense imagination" and "unlimited patience" of proud avenging woman appears to be no more than dependent obsession and a capacity for storing long-term grudges. Thankfully, not all her contributors in the collection celebrate such negative attributes.

Louisa May Alcott's sensational escapade certainly condemns the retaliatory urge. *Pauline's Passion and Punishment* (a real eye-opener for lovers of *Little Women*) is presented here with admirable lack of apology as a "florid romance", a "penny dreadful" first written for a popular magazine. It is fun glancing back at high Victorian melodrama; and interesting that Saunders dismisses Alcott's fears for the "poisoned chalice" of revenge.

Of course, most of us have experienced the desire "to pay someone back". It's understandable, sometimes sorely deserved, and it need not become a destructive force. Many of Saunders's contributors offer innovative tangents off



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



**A "frankly theatrical" staircase inside the controversial glass pyramid in the courtyard of the Louvre, Paris; from Carter Wiseman's lavishly illustrated monograph *The Architecture of I. M. Pei* (Thames & Hudson, £40)**

the revenge theme, some complete with wit, perspective and social purpose. Shena Mackay's "Curry at the Laburnums", for example, presents a humbling lesson in Indian pride for two prejudiced commuters; and "The Spider's Web", by Lisa St Aubin de Teran, ends with a pair of victims quietly disenabling their abusers.

Other contemporary stories in *Revenge* parade woman's tougher side, with a few expletives and varying degrees of success. They attempt an upfront exploration of complexes like sibling guilt or alienation, and sexual/emotional insecurity. They range from the funny and shocking to those which seem only to expose a self-conscious writer with a female inferiority complex. And, let's face it: you must have some kind of a complex to become obsessed with vendettas.

This is one of the reasons that Hilary Bailey's new novel, *In Search of Love, Money and Revenge*, is not as tacky as its packaging suggests. "Love and Money are soon within [the heroine's] grasp," the blurb promises, but "sweet revenge remains a most elusive prize." Actually, we have two abandoned wives and one mistreated child for whom relationships and finance only come right in the end, and for whom revenge is a pleasing chance by-product of their new-found independence. But that's typical of blurb writers.

With a healthier attitude towards the concerns of rejected women, it is only a shame that so much of Bailey's stitching shows in this story. Profound and hard-hitting it was never meant to be, but that's no reason to shirk on credibility. Annie and Vanessa happen to meet when both their husbands have deserted them for cardboard cut-out bimbos. The convincingly painful reactions of the wives are unconvincingly shortlived, whereupon two male replacements appear, disappear and re-emerge together at just the right time like synchronised swimmers.

Friendship, love, romance, (local) politics, family dynasty, mystery and suspense: all the ingredients of a popular read are in place. And if Bailey's ideals are a little shakily presented—with some grating stereotypes, the occasional awkward attempt to introduce race issues, and confusion over a crusading humanitarian who abandons his children—it's still nice when a ripping yarn destined for the big-seller lists bothers with ideals at all.

Hilary Bailey champions maturity, not vengeance, in the face of adversity. What does Kate Saunders mean by presenting revenge as "a thing of beauty and a joy forever"? Society's belligerents might understand. But most women, like their equals, have more progressive matters to attend to.

# Soft shoes with steel tips

**THE PENNY WORLD**
**Edward Blishen**
Sinclair-Stevenson £14.95

*Christopher Driver*

Anyone unwise enough to address Edward Blishen with "A penny for your thoughts?" would get an earful for four minutes 28 seconds precisely, which was the length stipulated for his literary interviews by one of his tiresome BBC producers; or very possibly a whole book weighing (no nonsense about kilograms) 14 ounces. For his regular readers know that Edward has been Digging for Victory, *à la* 1940, in his autobiographical mulch for years.

*The Penny World* is his latest prize marrow, and it is, of course, fully organic, innocent of those newfangled pesticides or hormones that inflate produce into blandness or bitterness. "Fancy," you could hear from some veg-or-lit packager, "there's a writer who's still in business at the age of 70, married to the same wife for more than 40 years, no sign of mutant or violent characteristics, and no disease to complain of except a slightly reluctant bladder. How does he earn his advance?"

True, there is an underlying love story this time, touching in its hair's breadth escapes from married mawkishness: "Do you take this man/woman to be your lawful wedded scapegoat, to misunderstand, misrepresent and blame till death do you part?" (If only Cranmer had put that bit into the liturgy, what a deal of trouble could have been saved at the divorce courts.) And as everyone past the age of consent knows, foreign travel in the company of one's beloved is an advanced course in scapegoatishness. Only the Blishens would have the sheer *chutzpah* to survive into their forty-first or forty-second anniversary after a celebratory (but organised) ruby anniversary trip to *India*, where everything goes wrong and a couple of English liberals are far too guilty about the begging-bowl eyes around them to vent their impatience at anyone except each other.

On looking back eight years, I realise that I had the advantage of Blishen on a similar road: a thicker skin; and a second chance at India within the same twelvemonth. My circumstances were, first, a Sheraton-level, expenses-paid, air trip to the north; second, a rail-and-bus, domestic-nostalgic tour of the south. The common feature of both journeys was a woman (one Indian, one English) able and willing to fight like a tigress for our own rights, flights, food, whatever, leaving me more and more Indian-patient if not Hindu-blissful as the weeks wore on. I like watching women work and some atavistic conformation of the muscles, which Blishen found so exquisite in those flexible friendships sculpted in sandstone at Khajurao, even enabled me to squat while waiting for buses, to my wife's Raj-derived consternation.


LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Blishen is naturally inadequate to India: everybody is. Organised trips, too, are heffalump traps for otherwise good travel writers (Eric Newby and Geoffrey Moorhouse among them): in groups you see the wrong things or at the wrong pace, and the heavy libel-breathing of your identifiable companions propels you either into whimsy or the novel you might have been wiser to write anyway.

The saving grace of Blishen is that he lives by his own half-confessed inadequacies, from the childhood he remembers to his well-earned bus pass—for even this book is not confined to the long India episode. Moreover, his soft shoes have steel tips and, as a lover of the word and its teachers, wounded to the heart by the "National Curriculum", he knows where to put his toes. No television viewer will need to be told which Cabinet pudding was at the other end of Blishen's microphone:

"With a preoccupied smile, a place-holder patently eager to hurry on to hold other and even better places had put a book together. I was to talk to him about it. It was, I thought, like interviewing a large glossy balloon made of thick rubber. You tried to impinge upon this balloon, to affect it in some fashion, but it wasn't possible. As you asked a question, the balloon received and deadened the impact of it, without at all attempting to identify (by the oral shape, I guessed) a question. I had never had such a curious sensation of not actually meeting a man in whose company I found myself."

Put that in the cuttings file, Ken.

# Lost virtues

**WILD PEOPLE**
**Andro Linklater**
John Murray £15.95

*Peter Metcalf*

This autumn's addition to the unending stream of travelogues about Borneo is an engaging enough read. It begins in postmodernist mode, heavily ironised, with emphasis on the illusions of cultural distance in the modern world. By degrees, however, it reverts to a more familiar vein, lamenting the lost virtues of life in a "unitary world". The last line of the book regrets the author's all-too-brief visit to "paradise".

Some time in the 1980s, Linklater was hired by Time-Life books to write the copy for a book about the Iban in their projected series on "People of the Wild". By his own account, he knew nothing about Borneo, but that hardly mattered, since, as his editor explained, his job was only to fill up the space between the pictures. The pictures were the key; they should contain no T-shirts, outboard motors, or corrugated iron. What *was* wanted was later divined by the Australian anthropologist who acted as guide: "Tits, that's what you want... I noticed that every time I mentioned tits at the interview, they would try not to smile. If you ask me, I think your photographs need to have lots of tits."

Thus charged, the expedition sets off into the interior of Sarawak (Malaysian Borneo), looking for unacculturated communities. Of course, they have no success. Everywhere they are dogged by the most absurd intrusions of the industrial world: longhouses furnished with pink linoleum, warriors wearing cloaks make of black nylon carpet in place of bear skins. The poor photographer is driven to distraction and blames the anthropologist, who is not sympathetic. They finally settle for the best that they can find and begin accumulating copy and artfully composed photographs. During their stay, Linklater makes an important discovery. Though hampered by a lack of language, he realises that what is most traditional about the society he has entered is not the sort of thing you can photograph. He fumbles for ways to describe these qualities and the admiration that he begins to feel for them.

In the second half of the book, there are appealing portraits of individual Iban, and several sharply observed incidents. For me, the most poignant concerns a visit to the city on the coast with his new friends, the old war leader and the bard. Upriver, these men have great stature; they are formidable respositories of true Iban ways. But in the city, making an "X" in the hotel register under the supercilious gaze of a Chinese clerk, they grow smaller. There is an act of vandalism here somewhere, but it is not clear who has committed it.


NEW STATESMAN SOCIETY

# SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

SUBSCRIBE to New Statesman & Society for one year and receive a FREE 1991 RUSSIAN FUTURIST DIARY, published by Redstone Press at £10.95.

This superbly designed diary is spiral bound with each entry page faced by an illustration produced in the heady atmosphere of that "great experiment" in Russian Art between 1910 and the young Revolution. The Futurists included Kamensky and Mayakovsky, as well as artists of the calibre of Malevich and Goncharova.

Not only a diary, but also the most complete visual record of the Futurists ever to be published. Get one for yourself, or as a gift, by completing this coupon today.

O. ROZANOVA. from War, 1915

**Please send a subscription to:**

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....DD1.

**Please send 1991 Desk Diary to:**

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....

I enclose a cheque/P.O. for ..... made payable to New Statesman & Society, *or debit my Access/Visa/Diners Club/American Express card number:*

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Signature.....

Subscription Rates: UK £60 ☐; Europe £70 ☐; USA $110 ☐; Canada $140 ☐; Rest Of World £77 ☐

Send to New Statesman & Society Subscriptions, FREEPOST, London E2 8BR (No stamp needed if posted in the UK)





LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Speak no evil

*Senior council officers are now banned persons, forbidden to voice their views in public*

*David Townsend*

My son said I was a bit like Nelson Mandela used to be. Flattered and puzzled by that, not being black, brave, imprisoned for 27 years nor a potential president of South Africa, I asked why. "Well," he said, "you're now a politically restricted person." Right on, my son. In May this year, I received formal notification from the head of personnel services in the borough that employs me that Part I of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 now applies to me, personally. It also applies in the same way to thousands of other local government staff up and down the country.

The legislation defines two main categories of local authority posts as being "politically restricted". Each local authority is required to deposit a list of these posts, usually with their borough or county secretary. The posts are those exceeding a predetermined earnings limit and those considered to be politically sensitive. As a result, a new class of people, the town hall bureaucrats, has been elevated to the status of Robert Maxwell or Jeffrey Archer—rich and politically sensitive. Unfortunately, the restrictions do not apply to that pair.

This interesting law is the product of the entirely justifiable hysteria that swept Downing Street in the period 1983-85, when two things were noticed. First, that some local authorities were noisily and expensively rejecting the government's advice on how to go about the business of local government. Second, that Bernie Grant was not only leader of Haringey Council, but actually had a job. Sadly, that job was with another London Labour council. A rather less well known fact, though undoubtedly recognised by the Prime Minister, was that the leader of the Conservative group on Lambeth council at that time was also employed by a Labour council.

Looking, as ever, for the balanced approach, the Prime Minister approved the appointment of David Widdicombe QC to lead a committee of inquiry and make recommendations. In particular, the committee was asked to "make any necessary recommendations for strengthening the democratic process". A team of researchers from the London School of Economics scoured the country for facts.

They completed their survey and Mr Widdicombe presented his report. Not many witches had been discovered. Unsurprisingly, the 514 local authorities differed in their practices: equally unsurprisingly, most councillors were white, middle aged and male. But legislation had to emerge: there was no other way.

In its present form, the aim is very clear. Sensing that senior local government officers have a vital impact on public political thought—a novel thesis, not well supported by any evidence—the government decided to pull the plug. In future, more or less in line with Widdicombe's recommendations, any local government officer holding a job that involved giving direct advice to employing councillors would be prohibited from being a councillor in another local authority. Shortly after the Widdicombe report was published, of course, Bernie Grant had submerged into a relatively dignified obscurity in the Commons. The emergency was over; the all-clear could have sounded. But it did not. Cleaning up town hall politics apparently also had to include prohibitions on seeking election to parliament and the European parliament by municipal servants.

*A wise parish councillor will not side with Labour over allotments, nor with Tories over the siting the noticeboard*

Even this was not considered adequate in the government's fight to restore decency to the town halls. Loopholes had been identified. Thus, local government officers earning more than £19,500 a year were to be excluded from holding elected public office. At least they had a right of appeal; initially to the "statutory and non-statutory chief officers"—directors of education, the fire brigade, parks and social services—who themselves had no right of appeal.

Further appeals may be lodged with the "independent adjudicator". He is based in a small office on London's Embankment as part of the Department of the Environment. The present independent adjudicator is the retired chief executive of Kent County Council, who is assisted in his task by a small staff.

The new law does not stop at intending prime ministers or would-be county council chairmen. Opinions held in public can be dangerous. Thus the expression of views "on matters of party political controversy" is also ruled out. The limit is as skilfully and subtly drawn as one would expect from a department of state run by such distinguished and successful ministers as Kenneth Baker and Nicholas Ridley. It is defined as the "extent to which it would be apparent that it was the intention to affect public support for a political party". This limit even extends to the only elected office that restricted persons may hold, that of parish councillor. A wise, restricted parish councillor will not be seen siding too openly with Labour over allotment questions, nor with Tories over the siting of the parish noticeboard. A complaint might be made.

The same is true of canvassing; this, too, is banned. A restricted person might be recognised canvassing on the doorstep. "You are Lobby Lud, director of sanitation in Lambeth and I am turning you in," are the sort of words a public-spirited voter might use in denouncing an offender. The same goes for any restrictee hoping to be assistant social secretary for his local Conservative Association. Organising dances is out. And, of course, writing to a newspaper expressing a party point of view is *de trop*.

Who judges the seriousness of alleged political offences? Complaints received by an employing authority will be examined by the "monitoring officer", a senior named officer. The legislation leaves suitable punishment to the employing authority's members if a guilty verdict is returned. The "monitoring officer" will no doubt interview the suspect, confronting him or her with evidence, probably over a convivial luncheon table to induce a false sense of security. So far no one is reported to have broken the terms of their restriction.

And here readers of *New Statesman & Society* may enjoy a new and deadly weekend competition, easier than trousering a tenner or popping the champers. Check articles in the *Local Government Chronicle* or *Municipal Review* and be first to bag a restricted person under the new act. Readers are advised that this article has been checked with my local monitoring officer over an extended lunch. It is clean.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

**VOLUNTEER NOTICE BOARD is a free service provided by New Statesman & Society with financial assistance from Thames Television's Help programme. Interested organisations are invited to send their copy (approximately 45 words) to Dawn King at New Statesman & Society, Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London, E2 8DQ by Friday preceding publication date. Please note this service is for recruiting volunteers only. If you have salaried vacancies contact the Classified Department on 071-739-1645.**

**BERKSHIRE PACT PROJECT** - Sova linked with Berkshire Probation Service and APEX Trust requires volunteers in Berkshire. The aim is to give young adults coming out of custody a positive start back in their community, thus minimising the risk of re-offending. After training, volunteers will work one to one with the young people involved on the project. For more information please contact Lynne Townend, 0734 505760.

**CROYDON** Independent Living Scheme. Volunteers needed. Would you like to help disabled people to live independent lives in the community? Can you offer a commitment of six months? Free accommodation (including all bills), personal allowance and local bus pass. Invaluable experience for successful applicants. Training given. Further details contact: Joanna Wright 081-686 4433 ext. 2792.

**HI, MY NAME IS STEVE** & I live in W. London. I urgently need another helper/driver to start a.s.a.p. No experience needed, just young, fit & keen to help. Three volunteers share my busy life, with free accom. pocket money, poll-tax exemption & generous time off. "A chance you shouldn't miss!" Interested? Tel: 081 577 3226 or write to: S. Cribb, YAC, 51 Grove Road, Hounslow TW3 3PR for details.

**CALLING KENT** Volunteers S.O.V.A., the national charity encouraging community involvement with offenders, is recruiting volunteers to support Probation Officers across North Kent. One-to-one and group befriending work available; supervision and support groups provided. Warmth and enthusiasm more important than qualifications. Training starts November, so contact Jonathan Nicholls or Pauline Yeeles ASAP: Rochester Probation Office, (0634) 812667.

**CHINAEYE,** a volunteer-run news digest magazine for the Chinese Democracy Movement, needs helpers. Typing, proof-reading, admin. - just a few hours a month. Chinese speakers especially welcome. Please contact Greg on 081 533 5257.

**PEOPLE LIKE YOU CHOOSE** to help – people who are lonely isolated or depressed. Volunteers needed for a variety of projects. We offer training and ongoing support at our offices in Islington & the City. Contact: Choice – FWA, 608 Holloway Road, N19. 071-272 1551.

**ARTICULATE VOLUNTEERS** are needed between 15th Oct to end of Nov. to help in the running of Will Aid. The work will be a mixture of taking calls, checking details and other basic administrative tasks. Based at Action-Aid's office at Archway, helpers will be paid expenses. Interested people should contact Cris Ellison at ActionAid on 071-281 4101.

**TROUBLE WITH** Neighbours. More volunteers are needed. Neighbours sometimes have problems with each other about noise, fences, cars etc. Lambeth Mediation Service is a free confidential service which offers help to neighbours. We need more volunteers to be mediators, answer the phone or help in the office - people from different cultures who speak other languages as well as English. We welcome people with disabilities or who are housebound. Free training will be given. Please ring Greta Brooks on (081) 678 6046.

## THAMES HELP

**Thames Help,** presented by Jackie Spreckley, is a four minute local social action programme. It appears four times a week on Thames Televison at 5.55 approximately (check TV Times for details). Here is a summary of this week's programmes.

**This week THAMES HELP is looking at the work of the hospice movement. Hospices are centres which provide an environment developed specifically to meet the needs of the dying. Their specially trained staff are able to control pain and other distressing symptoms of terminal illness to ensure that the 'quality of each individual life is such that people really live until the very moment they die'.**

**Monday 29 October – The Hospice Doctor**

Dr Gisela Field is the Deputy Director and a consultant surgeon at the Trinity Hospice in Clapham. She spends much of her working day simply talking and listening to her patients and demonstates the support and care which is such a feature of the hospice movement.

For more information, write to 'Hospices', Thames Help, PO Box 2LP, W1A 2LP.

**Tuesday 30 October – The Hospice Patient**

Eileen Cashier is 65 and suffers from cancer of the spine and breast. Although she has a terminal illness Eileen still lives for the most part independently at home but comes to Trinity Hospice every few months for a short period of respite care. Thames Help spoke to Eileen about her experience of the hospice movement.

For more information, write to 'Hospices', Thames Help, PO Box 2LP, W1A 2LP.

**Wednesday 31 October – The Home Care Nurse**

The range and diversity of care provided by hospices has expanded enormously over the last decade with the development of home care and day care to compliment the more traditional in patient care. Thames Help joined Harriet Copperman, nursing officer at the North London Hospice on her daily round and spoke to her about the philosophy that underpins hospice home care.

For more information, write to 'Hospices', Thames Help, PO Box 2LP, W1A 2LP.

**Thursday 1 November – Bereavement Counselling**

Gill Gould's husband, David died of cancer in July this year aged 41. Now with the support and help provided by the North London Hospice bereavement service she has started to rebuild her life and look towards the future.

For more information, write to 'Hospices' Thames Help, PO Box 2LP, W1A 2LP.

THAMES TELEVISION

Thames Help, Thames Television PLC, 149 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 9LL. Telephone: 01-387 9494.

**YOUNG, ENTHUSIASTIC** volunteer urgently needed as Helper/Driver by a wheelchair user (age 26). Board + lodgings, pocket money - sea, sun(!), fun - but quite hard work! Please phone me Steve Fethney 0243 670000 or write: 41 Legion Way, East Wittering, Chichester, W. Sussex PO20 8PP.

**ST ALBANS AREA:** Occasional volunteers wanted to help establish a weekend meals service for very frail elderly people living in the community. Approx. two hours on a Saturday or Sunday, once a month, would be the only commitment. Contact Susan Bakker, Volunteer Co-ordinator, Bleak House, Catherine Street, St Albans. Tel: 0727 860141.

**BLACK & WHITE** volunteers are needed to help with Otter Canoe Group for children with special needs in South London. The children in our group are from ethnic families. We meet every Monday evening in Battersea, between 6.30 pm - 10.30 pm. Please contact David or Celia on 071-733 7210.

**LIVE-IN VOLUNTEER** needed to support adults with learning difficulties to become integrated contributing members of the locality based in a Cheshire house in SE London. We offer £37.50 p/week (all found) to someone wishing to gain residential work experience. Attitude and ability to work within a team more important than qualifications. Further details tel. 071 732 0208.

**FULLTIME VOLUNTEERS** to work in a Day Centre for homeless people near London Bridge. Very practical, hands-on work of helping with the lunch and other services we offer. We are asking for a minimum of an eight week commitment. We offer voluntary wage of £25 p/w, travel expenses and if needed free room and board. Contact: Dan Martin, The Administrator at The Manna Society, 106 Farm Lane, London SW6 1QH. Tel: 071-381 1703.

**CLIMATE ACTION** Network UK urgently needs volunteers to help with administration. Experience with computers helpful, although not essential as training can be given. Expenses paid. CAN UK is a small international organisation dealing with information relating to the topical environmental issue of global warming, and works with WWF, Greenpeace and FoE. Please contact Sally Cavanagh on 071 490 4469 Mon - Weds, Friday.

**INDEPENDENT** Living Alternatives promotes independence for people disabled. We urgently need Female volunteers who can drive to provide physical support in return for free accommodation and £50 per week. If you want to become part of a progressive London based community initiative, contact us at: Independent Living Alternatives, Fulton House, Fulton Road, Empire Way, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 OTF. 081-902 8998 ext 270.

**JOINT COUNCIL** for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI), which advises and represents people with immigration and nationality problems and campaigns against the racism in immigration control, needs help on a regular basis with photocopying, sending out publications and other administrative tasks. Training, travel and lunch expenses provided. Please phone Roland Doven on 071 251 8708 if interested.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Classified Advertising

Display advertisement copy to be set – Monday noon
Lineage – Friday (prior to publication on following week)
Camera ready artwork – Tuesday
**Classified Display Rates:**
Standard Rate: £18.00 per s.c.c.
Voluntary Organisations: £11.00 per s.c.c.
Linage Rates: 50p per word (minimum 20 words) Box No. £2.50
All advertisements subject to VAT at 15%
**Correspondence should be addressed to**
Classified Advertisement Department
New Statesman & Society,
Foundation House, Perseverance Works,
38 Kingsland Road, London, E2 8DQ
Telephone: 071-739-1645
Fax 071-739-9307
Telex 28449

# Appointments

**ROMFORD Y.M.C.A.**
invite applications for a

## HOUSING ADVICE WORKER

This is a new and exciting position created to attempt to assist with the housing needs of **Young Homeless People** as well as the housing needs of the residents in our 150 room hostel.
Romford YMCA is probably the largest Christian organisation in the area. We are seeking applications from Christians with housing experience and an understanding of working with young people.
Salary: £11,000 circa
Contact: **Mr Pip Wilson, General Secretary, Romford Y.M.C.A., Rush Green Road, Romford, Essex RM7 0PH. Tel. 0708 766211.**
**(Closing date: 9 November 1990).**

SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND PUBLIC SERVICE STUDIES

## DEAN

**Salary £38,000 + Relocation Package**

The Polytechnic seeks to appoint a senior manager to take charge of the formation, and provide subsequent leadership for, the School of Health and Public Service Studies. This new School, the fourth in the Polytechnic, will comprise, in the first instance the staff and other resources of the Departments of Administrative and Social Studies and Health and Community Studies.

Reporting to the Director, the Dean will be responsible for the Academic leadership and the management, internal organisation, and discipline of all staff within the School. The successful applicant will have a high standard of academic and professional qualifications related to one or more areas of the School, and must be able to demonstrate the necessary managerial and interpersonal skills required for the role.

Application forms and further details are available from:

Teesside Polytechnic
WORKING TOWARDS EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

The Personnel Department,
Teesside Polytechnic,
Middlesbrough, Cleveland,
TS1 3BA.
Tel: 0642 342200 (24 hours).
Closing date: 9th November, 1990.

**WORLD UNIVERSITY SERVICE (UK)**
WUS(UK), Britain's leading third world development charity specialising in education, seeks a new

## GENERAL SECRETARY

WUS(UK) works to promote development through education; it is the UK National Committee of WUS International. Major activities are:

- support for education projects overseas
- scholarship programmes in the UK and overseas
- educational advice and assistance to refugees and asylum seekers in the UK
- campaigns on education and development

WUS programmes and campaigns focus on refugees, women and those in areas of conflict.

The General Secretary is responsible to the Executive Committee for the implementation of policy and management of the secretariat, which currently employs 28 staff. WUS(UK)'s activities have expanded rapidly over the last three years, with annual turnover of £4 million plus.

Candidates will need an understanding of development issues, and experience of fundraising, personnel and financial management, programme development and planning. The General Secretary represents the organisation nationally and internationally.

**Salary Scale: £21,117 - 24,711 (including London Weighting)**

PREVIOUS APPLICANTS NEED NOT APPLY

*Write or phone for further details to: Marise Willis, WUS(UK), 20 Compton Terrace, London N1 2UN (071-226 6747)*

**Closing date for applications: 17 November**

WUS SEEKS TO BE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER

*EDUCATION FOR DEVELOPMENT*

**New Statesman & Society Recruitment**
**For full details on rates and dates of future special issues please contact the Classified Advertisement Department and ask for Michael or Susan**
**Telephone: 071-739-1645**

## Conferences

## Working For Childcare

A conference for Trade Union Activists packed with practical ideas on negotiating and campaigning for quality childcare.

Saturday 17th November 1990
10.30 am – 5.00 pm
Natfhe Headquaters, 27 Britannia Street, London WC1.
Registration Fee £25.00.
Lunch and refreshments provided.
Free creche.

This conference is being organised by Working For Childcare, the campaign for quality childcare for working parents, and is sponsored by the following Trade Unions:

BIFU ⋆ CATU ⋆ COHSE ⋆ FBU ⋆ IRSF
NALGO ⋆ NATFHE ⋆ NUCPS ⋆ TGWU

*For more information and a registration form contact:*
**Working For Childcare, 77 Holloway Road, London, N7 8JZ. 071-700 0281.**


LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# LINEAGE/HEARTSEARCH BOOKING FORM

## *Special Offer*

## BOOK THREE — GET ONE FREE

If you book three consecutive ads you get an extra one absolutely free

You can now reach more than 250,000 readers every week with a small advertisement in *New Statesman & Society*.

*If you need to promote meetings, seminars,* Ronnie Barker's autobiography, property to let, or if you simply want to meet a soulmate through heartsearch then send us the completed coupon with your remittance

**50p per word (minimum 20 words) incl. VAT. Box Numbers £2.50 extra**

**Copy date: Friday. Prior to publication on the following Friday.**

Please complete the coupon below and send with remittance or credit card number.

*AD TEXT (BLOCK CAPS) or use separate sheet*

.....

.....

.....

.....

NAME.....

ADDRESS .....

.....

No. of weeks ..... Remittance £.....

Or charge my Access/Visa/Barclaycard No .....

.....

Please state classification.....

**Post coupon to:**
**Classified Department,**
**New Statesman & Society,**
**Freepost, London, E2 8BR**

SALFORD COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
in association with
THE UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD

## READER IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF HEALTH AND ILLNESS

up to £24501 a year - pay award pending

Applications are invited for this newly-created senior position, which results from the recent federal partnership between the University of Salford and Salford College of Technology. The appointment is from 1 January 1991, though later starting dates can be negotiated.

The post is formally attached to Salford College, but the successful candidate will teach courses in the Sociology of Health and Illness within the Department of Sociology at the University as well as within the Centre for Health Studies at Salford College. The postholder will also be expected to develop imaginative and productive research initiatives relevant to the health of the population of the North West and to play an active role in the development of creative new courses in health and social policy areas.

Telephone enquiries about this challenging new position can be directed either to: Malcolm Colledge, Head, Centre for Health Studies, Salford College (061 736 6541, ext 204) or Professor Ian Taylor, Chair, Department of Sociology, University of Salford (061 745 5000, ext 3150.)

Application forms and further details available from Personnel, Salford College of Technology, Frederick Road, Salford M6 6PU (061 736 6541, ext 352), to which Office completed applications should be returned by 9th November 1990.

Salford College of Technology
TUNED TO INDUSTRY & COMMERCE
College of Salford University

UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD

avec

## A NEW DIRECTOR

To give an energetic lead to this ecumenical training and consultancy agency offering an extensive rapidly expanding programme for church and community work with ordained, religious and lay workers in the principal denominations and voluntary organisations.

Someone with experience and enthusiasm for collaborative church and community development and keen to develop and promote the unique work of Avec in this field would find the position challenging and rewarding. Appointment from September 1991.

Salary negotiable based on current clergy stipends and allowances.

Send for job description and application form to:
**The Chairman of Trustees, Avec, 155a Kings Road, London SW3 5TX.**
Application before Friday 30th November 1990.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

## DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (BLACK & OTHER MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS)

**FLOOR 2, 33 WINE STREET, BRISTOL**
**Salary: Grade 5 £18,888 to £20,418 (pro rata)**
**Hours: 16 per week (negotiable)**
**second half job share**

The Department has recently been re-structured with a view to promoting the principles of community development in all areas of its work. This post is part of a team of County Professional staff with a remit for the development of policy and support targetted at the voluntary sector. Within this team, this post will involve, via consultation, the development of a coherent strategy for developing and supporting Black and other Minority Ethnic Groups in the community.

For an informal discussion please contact Haroon Saad, Community Development and Equal Opportunities Officer, Telephone Bristol (0272) 290777 Ext 6363.

In addition to the salary quoted we can offer you a range of benefits including a minimum of 21 days annual leave with extra leave at most Bank Holidays, generous sickness and maternity schemes and the opportunity to join an excellent pension scheme. If invited for interview we will reimburse your expenses including (in appropriate cases) the cost of providing for the care of dependent children/ relatives.

**Application by form only, available with further details from the Director of Personnel Services, PO Box 270, Avon House, The Haymarket, Bristol BS99 7HE, or telephone Bristol (0272) 298565 (answer machine on this number after office hours).**

**Please quote reference number CML/23009/M6 when asking for forms which must be returned by 9th November 1990.**

IN THE INTERESTS OF HEALTH WE OPERATE A NON-SMOKING POLICY

COMMUNITY LEISURE DEPARTMENT

*Avon as an Equal Opportunities employer considers applicants on their suitability for the post, regardless of sex, race, disability or sexual orientation.*

Avon COUNTY COUNCIL

## UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD LECTURER IN SOCIOLOGY

Required from 1 January 1991 or as soon as possible thereafter for a newly-created post in the Department of Sociology. Candidates should have experience and/or interest in the teaching of quantitative methods and should also be able to offer at least one other substantive area of sociology.

Commencing salary on either the Lecturers' Grade A or Grade B salary scale (rising to £16755 or £22311 a year); USS benefits. The University is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Further particulars and application forms obtainable from the Personnel Office, University of Salford, Salford M5 4WT (tel 061 745 5400 - 24 hr answering service). Completed applications should be submitted to this Office by 9th November 1990 quoting ref SOC/86/G. Informal enquiries may be made to Professor Ian Taylor (tel 061 745 5000, ext 3150).

## NUCPS

nucps
The National Union of Civil and Public Servants

The National Union of Civil and Public Servants have a permanent vacancy for a Secretarial Assistant. The requirements are an ability to type at 45 words per minute, use of a Wordprocessor (in particular the Wordperfect Package), be able to take shorthand at 100 w.p.m. and knowledge and experience of office practices is essential. Applicants should also have some understanding of the trade union movement.

The salary is on a five point scale commencing at £11,794, plus Inner London Weighting of £2169; 25 days annual leave and non contributory pension.

**For a copy of the job description please phone Miss Allen on (071 928 9671) or write to the Personnel Manager, NUCPS, 124 Southwark Street, London, SE1 OTU giving details of your qualifications and work experience.**

*NUCPS strives to be an equal opportunity employer.*

The closing date will be 10th November 1990.

## THE TRUSTEES OF DR RATCLIFFE'S SCHOLARSHIP FUND

invite applications from graduate or non-graduate students with a scientific or non-scientific background, who wish to study the theory and practice of osteopathy in an American Osteopathic College; it being the view of the founder of the Scholarship, himself an American trained osteopath, that the American concept was the purest osteopathy.

Applicants should give details of age and educational achievement, including any medical or cognate proficiency and should indicate the degree of financial help sought, since grants are available to cover fees and books, and also living expenses.

Applications should be sent before 31 December 1990, and if possible one character reference supplied, to:

**Mrs Barbara France**
**Messrs Hammond Suddards**
**Solicitors**
**10 Piccadilly**
**BRADFORD BD1 3LR**

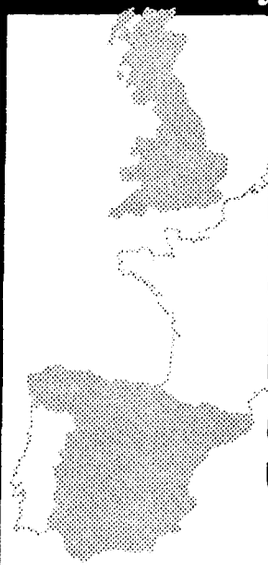
***(Applicants will not be judged on race, nationality, sex or religion).***



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

## Course


**Middlesex Polytechnic**



# STUDY PSYCHOLOGY, SOCIOLOGY OR PHILOSOPHY IN SPAIN

- Become mobile within post-1992 Europe
- Gain experience of one of Europe's fastest-growing economies
- Learn an international language
- Gain credits towards your British degree from a leading Spanish university
- Study within Britain's largest modular degree scheme, where Spanish can be combined with a very large range of other subjects

If you are making decisions about your 1991 entry degree choices, or perhaps advising others about the best options, find out more about

☐ BA HONOURS EUROPEAN SOCIETY (SOCIOLOGY AND SPANISH)
PCAS code LR43 EurSoc

☐ BA HONOURS PSYCHOLOGY AND SPANISH
PCAS code CR48 Psy/Sp

☐ BA HONOURS PHILOSOPHY AND SPANISH
PCAS code RV47 Phil/Sp

No knowledge of Spanish is required. Those joining the course in September 1991 will spend their third year at the Universidad de Deusto in Bilbao.

Normal degree course entry qualifications are expected. The courses are open to complete beginners in Spanish, those with a GCSE or A level in Spanish, and to bi-linguals. Mature students are also welcome to apply.

Ask for the
**MODULAR DEGREE SCHEME ADMISSIONS OFFICE**
on 081-368 1299 extn 3241/3214

or write to: MDS (ref C740/A), Middlesex Polytechnic, Bramley Road, London N14 4XS.

**THE *EUROPEAN* POLYTECHNIC**


## Lecture


1990 RAYMOND WILLIAMS MEMORIAL LECTURES

**UMBERTO ECO**
(Professor of Semiotics, University of Bologna)
Title
**OF FAKES AND FORGERIES**

The Bute Hall
University of Glasgow
Glasgow G12

Tuesday,
30 October 1990
5.15pm

Chair: Graham Martin
(*Professor of Literature, Open University*)

Admission free

Presented by the Raymond Williams Trust in association with the University of Glasgow

**GWYN WILLIAMS**
(Emeritus Professor, University of Wales)
Title
**ON THE BORDER**

The Jeffery Hall
Institute of Education
20 Bedford Way, London WC1

Tuesday,
13 November 1990
6-8pm

Chair: Graham Martin
(Professor of Literature, Open University)

Admission: £1 waged/50p students

Presented by the Raymond Williams Trust in association with the Joint Department of English and Media Studies, Institute of Education



**New Statesman & Society Classified Advertising**

**071 739 1645**


## Schools


**AN ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL**

St Christopher School has never lost sight of the central importance of the individual. Since 1915 we have aimed to show care and to encourage creativity in a combination that gives young people both immediate confidence and scope for life-long fulfilment.

Our campus has the atmosphere of an informal village with homely boarding houses for younger pupils and student-style accommodation in the Sixth Form. The diet is vegetarian. Children - and parents - of independent spirit respond well to the warm and purposeful ethos and to the opportunities for self-government. There is much to challenge both mind and spirit with 16 courses taken to A level, superb facilities for drama, music and art, a strong emphasis on sciences and modern technology, and adventure training for all.

Boy and girl boarders admitted at age 8 - 13 and directly into the Sixth Form, the Senior School of 370 is largely boarding. One mile from A1(M) and 35 minutes from Kings Cross.

Write or phone Mary McNab (Admissions Secretary) for prospectus.

Telephone: (0462) 679301 Fax (0462) 481578
ST CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL, LETCHWORTH, HERTS SG6 3JZ.





LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

## Volunteer

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**
Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture desperately needs volunteers to help fund-raiser send out mailings. We also need someone to catalogue papers and publications. Please contact Jenny on **071 284 4321.**

## Course

**LIVING WITH LOSS** "Educating for loss" date Feb 28th and March 1st 1991. A residential course for those working in the caring professions participants will have opportunity to explore feelings, skills, and strategies in order to enhance their caring role in the workplace. For information and applications contact Helen Ross Leicester 0533 - 784689.

## Agenda Mon 12 Nov

**UNIVERSITY OF LONDON:** The 1990 Creighton Lecture entitled: "OCCUPATION AND COLLABORATION: THE CONSCIENCE OF FRANCE" will be given by Professor Douglas Johnson (Professor of French History at University College London) at 5.30 pm on Monday 12 November 1990 at the University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU. Admission free, without ticket.

## Office To Let

**SHARED OFFICE SPACE TO LET** 124 sq ft. at 11.94 per sq ft. per annum plus use of meeting rooms and kitchen. 2nd floor close to Kings Cross Station. Ring Theresa or Frances for details on 071-833 2071.

## Personal

**LOOKING** for romance/marriage? UK/USA/ Worldwide, all ages. S.A.E. SOMEONE SPECIAL, P.O. Box 157, Luton, LU3 4HY. (0582) 597235.

## Holiday Let

**PRAGUE:** S/c well-equipped flat. Sleeps 4. 15 minutes city centre by convenient Metro. £120 per week. For details: 071-833 3056.

## Workshop

**Inspired by Scott Peck?**
**Author of Road Less Travelled/ Different Drum**
Announcing two Community Building Workshops to be held at
Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire
**9th - 11th November (£105)**
and in Manchester
**17th - 18th November (£80)**
**Enquiries to Wendy Payne**
**Chestnut Farm, Meare, Glastonbury, Somerset, BA6 9TH. Tel: 0458 - 6293.**

## Booksellers

**SCARCE BOOK SERVICE.** Hammersmith Books, Liffords Place, SW13 9LR. Phone 081 876 7254 (24hrs).

## Publications

**'UNDERSTANDING'** Literary Magazine. Contributions and subscriptions are invited (£1.40). Poems, short stories, plays. Dionysia Press, 20a Motgomery St, Edinburgh EH7 5JS + SAE.

## Heartsearch

**ARE YOU A QUIET, CONTEMPLATIVE,** non-smoking, warm woman with dark hair/eyes and vegetarian leanings? If so I (non-sexist male, 38) would like to meet you for weekend rambles and perhaps more. Staffordshire. Ethnic background irrelevant. Photo appreciated. Write to Box (40) 499.

**AM I THE ONLY LONELY,** but well-balanced, leftie out here? 30's bloke, bruised but resilient and witty, lots to give, Labour activist and CND, AA passivist, needs woman, 20's or 30's, for light-hearted but serious relationship. Yorks, Lincs, or nearby. Photo appreciated. No time-wasters, please! Reply to Box (39) 493.

**WOMAN, 40,** divorced. Ex-teacher, now counsellor, seeks professional man, warm, caring, sincere, with a sense of humour and curiosity with view for lasting relationship. Non-smoker. London. Please write Box (41) 507.

**YOU'RE FEMALE,** 35-45, slim, intelligent, smokeless (perhaps a teacher or librarian). I'm 42, professional, divorced, affectionate, humorous, greenish. Potential lasting relationship? Norwich. Please write to Box (41) 508.

**INTERESTING, INTELLIGENT,** independent, tall, good looking, sensitive, leftish, greenish, 36ish woman, seeks male friend with similar qualities and a sense of humour (36 - 45). S. Yorks/ Yorkshire area. Photo please and write to Box (41) 509.

**SIMPLY THIS:** Lively, independent, ex-workaholic, fortysomething woman seeks soul-mate to share quality time - hill walking/sea/ arts/food/baying at the moon/other. Northwest. Replies to Box (41) 510.

**COME CRUNCH** thro' southern autumn leaves with this tallish, interesting, artistic lady. Normal, kind, seeking 48-58 guy-erudite and problem free! Reply to Box (41) 511.

**TALL BEARDED GENTLE HUMOROUS** London man 47 seeks warm educated woman for loving relationship and sharing interests in books and arts. Please reply to Box (41) 512.

**CONSIDERATE PISCES (M),** 45, business graduate, musician, seaman, seeks love on a shoestring. London/Sussex. ALA. Please write to Box (41) 513.

**CONFUSED LONDONER** (male, 32) seeks woman to drink, sleep & discuss what remains of Marxism with, preferably in smoke-filled room. Please write to Box (41) 514.

**FRIENDLY HETEROSEXUAL MAN** (52, 5'6"), gentle, although experienced and intellectually tough, now single, would like to realise long standing dream of loving 3-cornered relationship - seeks two bisexual women who may be willing to risk an experiment. Please reply to Box (41) 515.

**SLENDER WOMAN,** 39, spinster, mother, aesthete, feminist, thinker, wishes to widen social circle with warm, amusing, communicative, comely bachelor, same generation, fine figure, style. London. Write to Box (41) 516.

**AFFECTIONATE, ATTRACTIVE WOMAN.** Early 40's, living midlands, loves log fires, ploughmans lunches, misty mornings, Mozart, coffee, feather duvets, sharing, learning, seeks man to share these, or other, good things. Please write to Box (41) 517.

**PROFESSIONAL MAN,** early 30s, left-of-centre. Interests conversation, cinema, countryside, cuisine, seeks female (25 - 34) for friendship, possibly more. West Midlands. Box (40) 500.

**ATTRACTIVE, WARM,** unconventional lady (mid 40s) in visual arts, tired of kissing frogs. Seeks cultured, fun loving, thoughtful prince (44-54) to share laughter, friends, theatre and silences. Photo please. Clwyd. Box (34) 429.

**OLDER WOMAN,** unconventional, generous-hearted with exciting professional life seeks independent thoughtful male friend/companion, versatile, well grounded in life, for now and then: Music, theatre, countryside, house in France, travel and .. (London). Please reply to Box (40) 495.

**FOR PROFESSIONAL** people the demands and pressures of modern life sometimes make it difficult to meet people. THE PICTURE DATING AGENCY can give that extra bit of help. We are different from other agencies in that you receive photos of compatible partners instead of just a list. For more details of our successful, caring and confidential service call 071-439 7091 (days), 081-852 8989 (eves). (London and S.E. area).

**WARM, INTERESTING, ATTRACTIVE MALE (33),** interested in books, theatre, cinema, etc, seeks attractive, creative, femme fatale for long-term relationship. Cuddles, laughter, solidarity are essential pre-requisites. (Maybe children?) Photo appreciated. Please write Box (40) 505.

**DECORATIVE, LIVELY CREATIVE** warm-hearted female 49 craves companionship intelligent, kind humorous man to share richness of life - arts, music, gardening, travel, cooking and laughter. Write to Box (40) 506.

**TELEDATING**
**T E C**

**Your advertisement appears in *New Statesman & Society* with your own personalised telephone number. Readers leave recorded messages for you on this number and by using your own personalised security code only you have access to these messages.**

**To answer any of these adverts simply dial the telephone number below your chosen ad.**

**Tel: 0839 81 2000 Teledating index and information line**
**Tel: 0839 81 2001 What is Teledating? (24 hours).**

**TO PLACE YOUR ADVERTISEMENT PLEASE CALL 071 465 8880.**

**LADIES,** if the men in this advertisement do not match your dreams please call. Teledate: 0839 - 812622.

**EARTHY, TALL MALE, 33,** easy going, country type, seeks fun loving lady for romance and love. Teledate: 0839 - 813070.

**DO YOU LAUGH EASILY?** I'm a good looking lady, early 40's, devoted too much of life to my work, and now hope to meet an honest, loving man. Teledate: 0839 - 813107.

**YOUNG HEART, YOUNG LOOKS.** Attractive blonde lady, 44, busy but alone, seeks loving, sincere man for friendship and maybe love. Teledate: 0839 - 813125.

**WARM, AFFECTIONATE LADY,** 38, loves entertaining, fun filled evenings, revelling with the right man, seeks male who appreciates an honest, loyal, supportive companion. Teledate: 0839 - 813142.

**Teledating uses Premium Rate Services. Calls on TELEDATING numbers commencing 0839 are charged at 33p per minute cheap rate and 44p per minute at all other times.**


# NEW STATESMAN & SOCIETY

**ADVERTISING STAFF**

**Display**
Jenny Shramenko
Mick Quirke

**Classified**
Michael Breen
Susan Newcombe

**Production**
Dawn King

**Secretary**
Linda Ring

**ADVERTISEMENT RATES**

**Display**
Page £1,050
2/3 page £700
Half page £550
1/3 page £400
Quarter page £300
1/6 page £200
Covers, inside front and outside back - £1,500
**Inserts**
£33 per thousand
**Discount**
20% Publisher's
15% Agency

**Classified**
Single column centimetre (3cm min) £18.00
Charities £11.00 per col-cm
Spot colour: 10% extra
Lineage, per word (min 20 words) 0.50p
Inserts, per thousand, £33
Agency commission 15% to recognised agents

**MECHANICAL DATA**
Dimensions (mm)
Page 267×200
Double col 267×132
Halfpage 131×200
Quarterpage 131×98
1/6 page 131×65
**Column widths**
**Display**
1 column 65
2 column 132
3 column 200
**Classified**
1 column 45
2 column 98
3 column 149
4 column 200
**Film:** Negative, right reading, emulsion side down
**Registration:** punch registered
**Screen:** (4-col): 150/in, 60/cm
**Screen:** (mono): 120/in, 48/cm
**Printing:** Heat-set web offset

NEW STATESMAN & SOCIETY
Foundation House
Perseverance Works
38 Kingsland Road
London E2 8DQ
*Telephone (071) 739 1645*
*Fax (071) 739 9307*





LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# NEW STATESMAN & SOCIETY

**Editor** Stuart Weir
**Deputy Editor** Stephen Pope
**Assistant Editor** Jolyon Jenkins

**Associate Editors** Anthony Barnett, Duncan Campbell, Philip Dodd

**Artefax Editor** Sally Townsend
**Books Editor** Boyd Tonkin

**Art Editor** Caroline Heler
**Chief sub/Production Editor** Ingrid Curl
**Sub-editor/Typesetting** Jill Chisholm
**Editorial Assistants** Colette O'Reilly, Terri Natale

**Political Correspondent** Sarah Baxter

**Writers** Sean French, Stephen Howe, Vicky Hutchings, Saeeda Khanum, Maria Manning

**Editor Society Today** Pat McNeill
**Poetry Editor** Hugo Williams

**Subscriptions** Barbara Reilly, Kay Leyden
**Syndication/Rights** Carol Anne McKenzie
**Office Manager** Gina Jennings
**Accounts** Lee Charles

**Chief Executive** Pat Coyne

**Janet Abrams** is a freelance critic specialising in architecture and the visual arts. **Carole Angier** is a writer. Her critical biography of Jean Rhys will be published in November by André Deutsch at £17.99. **Dea Birkett** is author of *Spinsters Abroad; Victorian Lady Explorers* (Basil Blackwell). **Peter Clarke** is a Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge. His book, *The Keynesian Revolution in The Making*, has just appeared in paperback from Oxford University Press. **Christopher Driver** is a writer and journalist. He is author of *The Exploding University* and *The British at Table*. **Douglas Kennedy** is the author of *Travels in the Bible Belt, USA*, published by Unwin Hyman. **Peter Metcalf** is a Professor of Anthropology at the University of Virginia. **Deborah Orr** is a freelance writer. **Kay Parris** is the ex-editor of *The Writer's Monthly* and is a staff writer for Haymarket Magazines. **Tony Quinn** writes for the *Independent* and the *Sunday Times*. **David Townsend** is Director of Social Services in Croydon. **Colin Ward**'s latest book *Talking Houses* is just out from Freedom Press. **Anthony Wright** is Reader in British Political Thought at the University of Birmingham.

**Subscription rates**
UK £55
Europe (inc Eire) £64
USA Air mail $146; air speed $99
Elsewhere: accelerated surface post £70; air mail rates on request
US Postmaster: address changes to *New Statesman & Society*, Speedimpex USA Inc, 45-45 39th Street, Long Island City, NY 11104

Incorporating 'The Nation', 'The Athenaeum', and 'The Week-end Review'.
Registered as a newspaper.
Typesetting by ECM, 36-42 Clerkenwell Road, London EC1. Colour origination by Graphic Ideas, 135-139 Curtain Road, London EC2.
Printed by BPCC Business Magazines (Colchester) Ltd, Newcomen Way, Colchester C04 4TG (Tel: 851665). Distribution by COMAG, Tavistock Rd, West Drayton, Midx UB7 7QE 0895 444055. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY USPS 382260. Air freight in US by Speedimpex USA Inc.
16mm and 35mm microfilms, 105mm microfiche and article copies are available through University Microfilms Inc, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106.


# ENDGAMES

## WEEKEND COMPETITION

**No 3148 Set by E O Parrott**
A 12-line poem entitled "The Fight for the Booker" that includes as many book titles as possible.

**Report by Ms de Meaner**
Congratulations to Gavin Bart on managing to cram his poem with the largest number of titles: 30 in all. This is one more than Gavin claimed he'd contrived to insert, as he hadn't spotted the "she" on the second line. Unfortunately, the quality of others meant he got pipped at the post. I felt that those, like David Heaton, whose book titles actually *appeared* as book titles, were making life a little too easy for themselves. I quote from Heaton: "I dream it is fought in Victoria's day—/*Bleak House* contending with *Phineas Phinn*,/*Coningsby* leading *The Last Days of Pompeii*,/ *Les Miserables*, *Cranford*, both tipped to win." Various "Fights for the Booker" didn't seem to be about the Booker at all. John Davidson took this to the ultimate extreme by calling his three poems: "The End of the Road", "The Naked and the Dead" and "In Youth is Pleasure", thereby getting a book into the title *as well* as not writing about the Booker. £15 for the winners.

A *precious bane*, this fight. *Great expectations*
Divide Britain's *small world* into *two nations*:
One, needing no *persuasion*, sees *the trial*
*The jewel in the crown* of novels' style;
The other greets with *nausea* inanities—
Books that should stoke a *bonfire*. *Of the vanities*
*The old devils* scribble, they're quite vague.
At Ladbroke's back *the outsider*. It's *the plague*
That *London fields* each year. There're no surprises
In trite *possession* of the *glittering prizes*.
Should *hard times* speak *the message to the planet*:
This farce should be abolished? Can it?

**D A Prince**

*The groves of academe* cite *earthly powers*,
*The well-beloved* myths stripped, vide *Aaron's rod*,
*A question of upbringing* shocked Islam,
*Where angels fear to tread*, Sal Rushdie trod.

Wild *men at arms* demand *a severed head*.
*These charming people*! hide neath a *green hat*,
This Booker scribe, though's not *a burned-out case*,
He writes still, wishing "*Goodbye!*" *to all that*.

*Far from the madding crowd, hard times, bleak house*,
*Our mutual friend*'s *gone with the wind*?; no, he's
*The sleep of reason* stirred; *the holy war*'s
Not stopped him *hearing secret harmonies*.

**Chas F Garvey**


# An Owl in a Sack Troubles No Man

**A compilation of the best of our famous Weekend Competition 1979 - 88**

*Once upon a time there were four little rabbits - Flopsy, Mopsy, Cotton-tail and Peter - and very delicious they were too. (The Tale of Peter Rabbit).*

**Robin Ravensbourne**

*The hand that wears the boxing glove cannot lift the vol-au-vent to the lips.*

**Bill Greenwell**

*Ayatollah Khomeini: I like to see a shapely pair of legs on a woman.*

**D.M. Stobbs**

If you missed out, you can order your copy by sending a cheque for £2 (to cover admin, P&P), made payable to New Statesman & Society, to: Owl in a Sack, NS&S, Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London E2 8DQ. *Generous discounts for bulk orders.*





LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

*In the beginning* is the *word of mouth,*
*the horse's mouth* and *the world inside,*
a *brave new world where angels fear to tread,*
*an area of darkness.* It's *an awfully big adventure.*
But *how far can you go? The Gate of Angels*
leads to *reflections in a golden eye, remembrance*
*of things past: hard times, love on the dole, troubles*
until *all our yesterdays* negate the *lies of silence.*

*Solomon Gursky was here, amongst women,*
*the outsider* at *the trial,* lacking *persuasion.*
*Put out more flags, beloved* and send
*flowers for the judge* who made *the choice POSSESSION.*

**M E Ault**

"You're *staying on*!" *The group* grew glum;
*The disenchanted* chairman railed.
*The bell* rang. *One* called, *cocksure, "Some*
*Do not* deserve the *money,* failed
To halt *despair*!" They took him out:
*The razor's edge, a severed head,*
*The body* dumped... The chairman's shout?
*"I want it now*! Don't *wilt,"* he said.
And oh, *the trial, the damned* distress
Till from the chair came: *"Look at me*!"
A *late call*! *Providence*! *Success*!
For the chairman ruled: "This book's *v.g."*

**Bill Greenwell**

*Young Adolf* tipped me, "Beryl Bainbridge!"
Straight from *the horse's mouth* he said.
*Sweet William* said he'd *great expectations*
Of her as well: *"She* is ahead."
Then *Mrs Dalloway* came in;
This char who'd known *hard times* opined,
"Well, without *pride and prejudice*
She's *the great gatsby* to my mind.
Most *wives and daughters* do adore her,
And *sons and lovers* praise her too.
She lodged with *Emma,* then *Clarissa*
*The seamstress* in *a room with a view."*

**George Moor**

John McGahern will need *iron in the soul* and *ambition*
To satisfy Eire's *great expectations* of *success*
But *the trial* will not be of *a single man*
*A lonesome traveller on the road*
For he'll have the *intimacy* of his *family and friends*
But he'll be *lucky* if there's any *money* left
After the *Dubliners* have celebrated in *the way of all flesh*
Although the *chances* are that he'll know no more
Of *hunger, nausea* or *hard times*
As *far from the madding crowd* on his *animal farm*
He will pen *words* of his native *island*
And survey the *landscapes after the battle.*

**Mark Ambrose**

**No 3151 Set by Tom Foolery**

Last week's *NSS* cover story was by Beatrix Campbell on child satanic abuse; and the magazine also included a collection of writings by Arthur Marshall. Give us Arthur Marshall on satanic abuse, or Beatrix Campbell on life at Myrtlebank. Two hundred words by 8 November.

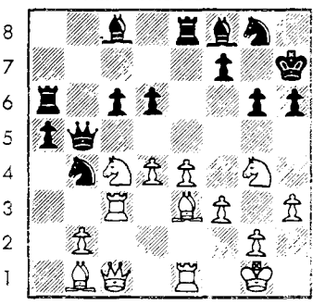
I notice that the "to be in by" dates have been set a week earlier than they should have been for the past three competitions. Don't worry: the judges are working to the correct dates, even if they haven't told you about it, and your entries will receive all due consideration.

# CHESS

Kasparov's choice of the King's Indian when he had Black in the first game of the world championship match was a declaration of aggressive intent. The King's Indian increases the probability of a decisive result. Standard match strategy at this level has been to play for a win with White, while holding the draw with Black.

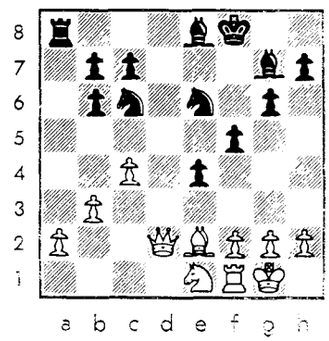
The first game ended in a draw. But if Kasparov was going to put Karpov under pressure with Black, what would he do when he had the White pieces? The second game exceeded all expectations:

**Kasparov - Karpov, 2nd Match Game. Ruy Lopez.**
**1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 0-0 Be7 6 Re1 b5 7 Bb3 d6 8 c3 0-0 9 h3 Bb7 10 d4 Re8 11 Nbd2 Bf8 12 a4 h6 13 Bc2 exd4 14 cxd4 Nb4 15 Bb1 bxa4 16 Rxa4 a5 17 Ra3 Ra6** Both players were familiar with these moves. Has Kasparov prepared something new? **18 Nh2 g6 19 f3!** Yes. The combination of h3 and f3 seems antipositional because it weakens the dark squares (g3 and f4). The point is that in this position it is more important to fortify the diagonal in the teeth of the Bb7. **Qd7 20 Nc4 Qb5 21 Rc3 Bc8 22 Be3 Kh7 23 Qc1!** A fine double-purpose move. The immediate threat is to win the c-pawn with 24 Na3, but the Queen is also lining up against h6. **c6 24 Ng4 Ng8?** Undoubtedly an oversight. 24...Bxg4 25 hxg4 is uncomfortable because the h-file is opened against the weakness on h6. But that was the lesser evil.



**25 Bxh6! Bxh6** Clearly 25...Nxh6 26 Nf6+ and 27 Nxe8 is even worse. **26 Nxh6 Nxh6 27 Nxd6 Qb6 28 Nxe8 Qxd4+ 29 Kh1 Qd8** There is no escape for the White Knight, so Kasparov's combination turns out to be a sort of transaction—Rook plus pawn for two Knights. The investment was well judged. **30 Rd1 Qxe8 31 Qg5 Ra7 32 Rd8 Qe6 33 f4 Ba6 34 f5 Qe7 35 Qd2 Qe5 36 Qf2 Qe7 37 Qd4 Ng8 38 e5** By bringing the Bishop into play he soon crushes Karpov's resistance. **Nd5 39 fxg6+ fxg6 40 Rxc6! Qxd8 41 Qxa7+ Nde7 42 Rxa6 Qd1+ 43 Qg1 Qd2 44 Qf1 1-0** Given that the first 18 moves were "theory", and yet Black's position was already shattered by move 25, this was a dreadful defeat for Karpov. In the next game, the champion produced an astonishing sacrificial conception:

**Karpov - Kasparov, 3rd Match Game. King's Indian.**
**1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 Nf3 0-0 6 Be2 e5 7 Be3 Qe7 8 dxe5 dxe5 9 Nd5 Qd8!?** What's this? Here White only reckons with 9...Nxd5 10 cxd5 and then probably 10...Qb4+ 11 Qd2 with the better of an ending. **10 Bc5 Nxe4!?** Sacrificing the exchange, as indeed he now must since 10...Re8? loses to 11 Be7 Rxe7 12 Nxf6+. **11 Be7 Qd7 12 Bxf8 Kxf8 13 Qc2 Nc5 14 Rd1 Nc6 15 0-0 Ne6 16 Nb6** At this point, an ordinary player would probably think the time had come for Black to resign. But Kasparov is unconcerned by the loss of his Queen, so long as his other pieces combine actively. **axb6 17 Rxd7 Bxd7 18 Qd2 Be8 19 b3 e4 20 Ne1 f5**



Black has only Bishop, Knight and pawn for his Queen. But Karpov is soon in deep trouble. **21 Bd1 Ne5 22 Nc2 Rxa2 23 Qd5** The Queen is White's one active unit. He surrenders her for Rook and Knight to stem the pressure. **Ke7 24 Nb4 c6** Now the Queen is trapped. But presumably Karpov could not have overlooked that. **25 Qxe6+ Kxe6 26 Nxa2 Nf7 27 Be2 Nd6 28 Nb4 Bc3 29 Nc2 f4** Taking stock now, we find Black has two pawns for the exchange and his pieces dominate the centre. Such a position must be winning for Black. **30 Rd1 h5 31 f3 e3 32 g3 g5 33 Bd3 h4 34 Kf1 c5 35 Ke2 b5** Perhaps this break is too hasty, since now White's Rook becomes active. 35...Bc6 looks more natural. **36 cxb5 Nxb5 37 Bc4+ Ke7 38 Rd5 Bf6 39 Rxc5 Nc3+ 40 Kf1 Bg6 41 Ne1** The game was adjourned here with Kasparov sealing his next. For once the time-scramble has robbed him of victory. **Kd6 42 Ra5 fxg3 43 hxg3 hxg3 44 Ng2 b5 45 Ra6+ Ke7 46 Ra7+ Ke8 47 Ra8+ Bd8 48 Nxe3 bxc4 49 Nxc4 g4 50 Kg2 Ne2 51 Ne5 gxf3+ 52 Kxf3 g2** One last trick: 53 Kxg2? Be4+. But Karpov has a way to make the draw safe. **53 Rxd8+ ½-½.** So Kasparov was just one win ahead instead of two. Karpov could draw little comfort from this. Finally, the position given in our diagram of 12 October [in Forsyth: 8/7p/5Qpk/16/6P1/3p1PKP/4q3] was from a game Kartanaite-Kutavicsiene, Vilnius 1983, which concluded: **1 Qf8+ Kh5 2 Qf4!** White has better than a draw. The immediate threat is 3 Qh4 mate. If now 2...Qe7, then 3 g4+ Kh4 4 h3 threatens both Qh6 mate and 5 g5+ and 6 Qg4 mate. **g5 3 Qf7+ Kh6 4 Qf6+ Kh5 5 g4+! Kh4 6 Qf3 Qe4** The one way to stave off Qg3 mate, if only for a few moves. **7 Qxe4 d1=Q 8 h3 Qd7 9 Qf3 1-0** 9...Qd6 10 Qg3+ Qxg3+ 11 fxg3 mate is in store—and all forced from the original position.

*George Botterill*



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

...ESY OF
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE LIBRARY
Big Sandy, Texas

# WHOEVER SAID "TIME IS MONEY?"

Campo Viejo Gran Reserva - a full bodied red wine made from selected Tempranillo, Mazuelo and Graciano grapes from only the finest vintage years. The wine is mellowed for 3 years in Limousin oak casks and is matured for a further 3 years 'in bottle'. At around £6.50 per bottle, it's nice to know that in some parts of the world, time still doesn't mean money.

LOOK FOR THE LITTLE STAMP THE GUARANTEE OF ORIGIN.

Unmistakably Rioja

Campo Viejo

AVAILABLE FROM AUGUSTUS BARNETT, CELLAR 5, GATEWAY SUPERMARKETS, WILLIAM MORRISONS SUPERMARKETS, MESON DONA ANA TAPAS BAR, MESON DON FELIPE TAPAS BAR AND DISCERNING WINE MERCHANTS AND TAPAS BARS THROUGHOUT THE UK.

MATURED IN OAK FOR A UNIQUE TASTE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED